



Horizons 2020

Comprehensive Plan Update

Town of Huntington, New York

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Acknowledgements

Town of Huntington

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executive summary

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Overview

The Town of Huntington stands at an important juncture in its history. Over the last several decades it has moved from an era of rapid growth with ample reserves of undeveloped land to become a mature, largely built out suburban community for which preservation and enhancement of existing character will replace growth as the primary planning goal. Looking towards the future, the challenges facing the Town will be: How do we maintain the high quality of life that our citizens enjoy? How do we preserve our remaining open space and environmental resources? How do we manage future growth and redevelopment to meet the aspirations of our citizens?

The Town has chosen to address these challenges by preparing a new Comprehensive Plan—Horizons 2020—that charts a new course towards the future. The Comprehensive Plan articulates a Vision of Huntington in the years beyond 2020 based on extensive citizen input during the planning process. It provides the means to realize the Vision through clear and consistent goals, policies, and strategies and through specific actions that the Town will take to positively and deliberately influence growth and change to achieve expressed citizens’ values and aspirations for our community.

Plan Organization

The Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan is comprised of the following sections:

1.0 Introduction

Describes the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, provides an overview of the process used to develop the Plan, summarizes key demographic trends in Huntington, and identifies basic principles that guide the plan recommendations.

2.0 Vision Statement

Establishes a positive Vision of Huntington’s future based on the direct input of citizens during the planning process. The Vision Statement establishes the mandate and direction (*“what we want to be”*) for the policies, strategies, and actions contained in the remainder of the Comprehensive Plan (*“what we must do to achieve the Vision”*). It also identifies six Key Initiatives that set priorities for action by Town government.

Chapters Three to Nine (Plan Elements) define goals, policies, and strategies for the following elements or subject areas of the Comprehensive Plan:

3.0 Environmental Resources and Open Space

4.0 Community Character

5.0 Community Facilities

6.0 Land Use

7.0 Economic Development

8.0 Transportation

9.0 Housing

For each subject area, a goal or goals derived from the Vision Statement sets the overall direction for the future while the policies and strategies specify in detail how the goal(s) is to be achieved.

10.0 Geographic Focal Areas

Applies the policies and strategies from the plan elements to areas within the Town that have the greatest potential for change over the timeframe of the Plan. Referred to as geographic focal areas, they include hamlet and unincorporated village centers, the Melville Employment Center, and commercial corridors.

11.0 Implementation

Describes how the policies and strategies contained in the plan elements are to be implemented.

Vision Statement

The Vision of Huntington in 2020 and beyond directly reflects the values, aspirations, and priorities expressed by citizens during the planning process. In this Vision of the future, the Town's outstanding **quality of life** and **community character**—the key attributes of the place that is Huntington—have been preserved for future generations. The Town's exceptional livability and distinctive character have been achieved and maintained by strategically targeting actions over time towards four fundamental elements of the Vision:

Community Character

Protect Huntington's small-town suburban character; preserve its rich heritage of historic resources; maintain and enhance its aesthetic character and identity; and practice responsible environmental stewardship.

Quality of Life

Provide quality schools, parks, and other community facilities; promote a vibrant arts community and cultural life; provide quality housing to meet the needs of Huntington's diverse population; and continue Huntington's tradition of citizen involvement and volunteerism.

Sustainable Community Structure

Manage new development and redevelopment to protect neighborhood and village character, preserve open space, and revitalize commercial corridors; maintain a diverse employment base; develop an accessible, multi-modal transportation system; and provide sustainable water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure systems.

Responsive Town Government

Provide exceptional public services, programs, and facilities while continuing prudent fiscal management; provide leadership in managing growth and change; promote civil discourse and constructive dialog on challenging issues; encourage citizens to become well-informed and actively involved in civic affairs; and promote greater intergovernmental cooperation.

Key Initiatives

Six Key Initiatives have been identified to organize and direct action by the Town to achieve the Vision Statement. These initiatives are:

Traffic Circulation

Work with state and county agencies to **retrofit the road network** with state-of-the-art signalization and other targeted improvements to enhance operational efficiency and **reduce traffic congestion**.

Open Space Preservation

Continue to expand the network of permanently **reserved open space** and improve the protection of sensitive environmental resources, such as groundwater supply.

Housing

Alleviate substandard housing conditions, while promoting a more **diverse housing stock** affordable to all income groups.

Development Quality

“Raise the bar” on development quality and sustainability through standards tailored to retain and complement the unique identity of the Town’s diverse neighborhoods, villages, and commercial areas, while addressing environmental, traffic, and other impacts.

Commercial Corridors

Improve the **aesthetic character and viability of commercial corridors** through design standards and actions to promote revitalization and redevelopment of undesirable and obsolete development patterns with appropriate uses.

Sustainable Huntington

Mobilize a community-wide initiative to achieve a more **sustainable future** for the Town of Huntington, through measures that conserve energy, reduce carbon emissions, and promote a healthy environment.

Plan Elements

The seven plan elements contain policies and strategies that, implemented over time, will move Huntington towards the future articulated in the Vision Statement. While presented in separate elements, these policies and strategies are interrelated and are designed to work together to support realization of the Vision and Key Initiatives.

Environmental Resources Element

Addresses Huntington's natural resources and ecosystems, open space, and parks and recreation facilities. Two of the Key Initiatives—Open Space Preservation and Sustainable Huntington—relate directly to this element. Important recommendations for natural resources include:

- Strengthen regulatory protection of natural resources.
- Work with Suffolk County to safeguard Huntington's drinking water supply.
- Implement a "Green Huntington" tree management and planting program.

The Plan proposes expanding the Town's open space and greenway network by strengthening the open space acquisition program, promoting open space dedication in new developments, and working with landowners, institutions, and land conservation organizations to preserve privately owned open space. It also calls for development of a new Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan to address community needs for parks, recreational facilities, bikeways, and pedestrian trails.

Community Character Element

Addresses Huntington's visual character and community appearance and its rich historic and cultural resources and heritage. Relevant Key Initiatives include Development Quality and Commercial Corridors, both of which relate to visual character. Important recommendations include:

- Update the Town's inventory of historic resources and strengthen public awareness of the importance of these resources.
- Improve the Historic District, Buildings, and Landmark Ordinance.
- Continue to make visual improvements to gateways and other prominent public places in the Town.
- Improve design standards for new development.
- Continue to increase code enforcement efforts to address visually blighted properties.

Community Facilities Element

Addresses schools, libraries, fire and rescue services, police protection, and Huntington Hospital, as well as all municipal facilities and services. Excellent community facilities and services are a key component of Huntington's quality of life. At the same time, the increasing costs of some services—particularly public education—are a major concern of residents. By law, schools, libraries, and fire are the responsibility of independent taxing jurisdictions with independently elected boards while police protection is provided by Suffolk County. The Comprehensive Plan, therefore, is limited in its ability to directly influence community facilities other than those that are directly provided by the Town. Nevertheless, it provides direction for the Town to work cooperatively with other providers to help achieve the goal of cost-effective community facilities and services that meet citizens' needs and contribute to Huntington's excellent quality of life. Important recommendations include:

- Support and work with service providers to identify needs and address costs.
- Continue collaborative efforts of the Town and local school districts to address common issues.
- Address the impacts of development on community facilities, including:
 - › Require contributions to school districts for residential density increases.
 - › Support regional/state efforts to address school costs.
 - › Improve capabilities to accurately forecast enrollment trends.
 - › Investigate use of an "Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance".
- Promote economic development to lessen the residential property tax burden.
- Use green building techniques in the design and construction of municipal facilities.
- Develop a long-range Municipal Facilities Master Plan.

Land Use Element

The goal is to manage development and redevelopment to protect valued land use patterns and to maintain or improve the character of areas experiencing pressures for change. It addresses the general locations, patterns, relationships, and character of residential, commercial, industrial, open space and recreation, and institutional land uses throughout Huntington. The land use policies and strategies focus on:

- Maintaining and protecting stable, high quality land uses and land use patterns (single-family neighborhoods, hamlet centers, etc.).
- Improving the visual character and viability of commercial corridors and areas experiencing decline or obsolescence.

Relevant Key Initiatives include Development Quality, Commercial Corridors, and Sustainable Huntington. Important recommendations include:

- Modernize and update the Zoning Ordinance and Map in stages over several years. Priorities include:
 - › Enact regulations to protect neighborhoods, hamlet centers, and other desirable land use patterns from incompatible development, including replacement of the “one size fits all” C-6 General Business Zoning District with districts tailored to the characteristics of local centers.
 - › Improve design standards for commercial corridors.
- Develop and implement an area plan for the Melville Employment Center to address land use, circulation, and infrastructure issues in an integrated manner.
- Target public investments where appropriate to support revitalization efforts, for example:
 - › Investments in streetscapes, other public improvements, and community-serving uses (e.g., the Huntington Economic Development Corporation’s Huntington Station Revitalization Program).
 - › Façade improvement/signage replacement programs.
 - › Consideration of provision of public parking where needed in older commercial areas.
- Incorporate green building and sustainable site development provisions and incentives into the Town Code.
- Pursue joint planning with adjacent municipalities in areas of regional significance, including the Route 110 Corridor and Sagtikos Regional Development Zone.

The Land Use Element includes a Generalized Future Land Use Map for use in conjunction with the policies and strategies to guide Town decision-making on land use issues.

Economic Development Element

The goal is to promote a healthy, diversified, and sustainable economy that provides a strong tax base, needed goods and services, and employment opportunities for residents. It acknowledges the key connection between a healthy economy and a high quality of life, which attract businesses and the workforce on which they depend. At the same time, Huntington’s attractiveness as a place to live and locate a business is affected by factors such as traffic congestion and increased demand for costly services. Important recommendations include:

- Maintain a strong office and industrial employment base.
 - › Promote the Melville Employment Center as a biotechnology hub .
 - › Encourage smaller-scale employment/office uses to help revitalize older commercial corridors.
- Maintain a strong, diversified retail base.

- › Enhance the retail character of unincorporated village centers.
- › Encourage reinvestment in older commercial corridors.
- Address cost of living factors that impact economic viability.
- Promote business start-ups and development.
- Promote public/private economic development partnerships.
- Encourage economic activities relating to Huntington's historic role as an access point to Long Island Sound fisheries resources.

Transportation Element

The goal is to provide a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system that provides residents with convenient choices for accessing destinations. It addresses roads and vehicular travel, public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and parking.

During the planning process citizens identified traffic congestion as a primary issue of concern. Key factors that contribute to congestion include 1) reliance on the automobile as the primary means of transportation and 2) a roadway system that because of its historic development lacks a systematic east-west and north-south grid pattern adequate to handle present day traffic volumes. Because the Town is almost entirely built-out, few opportunities exist to significantly widen roads or establish new road connections. There are, however, important steps that can be taken to lessen congestion. The Traffic Circulation Key Initiative calls for improving operational efficiency through "state-of-the-art" integrated signalization systems and other targeted roadway improvements. Additional transportation recommendations include:

- Develop a Long-Range Transportation Plan to coordinate capital improvements to local, county, and state roads.
- Consider a bond referendum and/or other funding source to support priority transportation improvements.
- Explore regulatory approaches to addressing the traffic impacts of new developments.
- Work with HART, Suffolk County Transit, and LIRR to improve transit service.
- Develop town-wide pedestrian and bicycle networks.
- Develop parking management plans to relieve village center congestion.
- Improve environmental quality by reducing automobile (and fossil fuel) usage.

Housing Element

The goal is to provide housing choices that are suitable and affordable for Huntington's diverse households and compatible with community character. Housing is a major issue for

Huntington and all of Long Island. Although housing prices have moderated recently since their peak, they remain prohibitively expensive for middle-income families and first-time homebuyers when combined with other costs such as school taxes and home heating bills. Another trend is the changing demographic towards smaller, “non-traditional” households, resulting in demand for alternatives to single-family detached homes. The Housing Key Initiative calls for a two-pronged strategy to 1) alleviate existing substandard, overcrowded, and illegal housing and 2) diversify the Town’s housing stock to meet residents’ needs. Important recommendations include:

- Eliminate substandard, overcrowded, and illegal housing.
 - › Increase code enforcement.
 - › Expand the Town’s Take Back The Block Program.
 - › Improve the flexibility of the Accessory Apartment regulations.
 - › Assist persons displaced from illegal housing units.
- Address the need for a more diversified housing stock.
 - › Strengthen requirements for affordable/workforce housing as a condition of zone changes.
 - › Utilize apartments in village districts and mixed-use redevelopment to replace obsolescent commercial development.
 - › Implement strong quality construction and “green” construction guidelines.
 - › Undertake public education on the need for, benefits, and impacts of a diversified housing stock.
 - › Designate a Town affordable/workforce housing coordinator.
 - › Give affordable/workforce housing preference to Town/School District residents.
- Provide for the housing needs of low income and special needs populations.
- Address the impacts of new housing developments on schools.

Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies, efforts to provide a more diverse housing stock should focus on replacing and improving undesirable or obsolescent land uses while keeping stable neighborhoods intact. The Plan also recommends that steps be taken to assure equitable distribution of housing types throughout the Town and its school districts.

Geographic Focal Areas

The Geographic Focal Areas chapter establishes goals and recommends strategies for areas of Huntington that have the greatest potential for change. These areas include:

Hamlet/Unincorporated Village Centers

- Cold Spring Harbor
- East Northport
- Greenlawn
- Huntington Station
- Huntington Village

Commercial Centers and Corridors

- Melville Employment Center
- Jericho Turnpike
- Route 110 (Jericho Turnpike to Melville)
- Minor commercial corridors

The recommendations for these areas seek to protect and reinforce Huntington’s hamlet and unincorporated village centers and to improve the character and viability of automobile-oriented commercial areas. They include zoning changes to protect traditional land use patterns and to improve the character and quality of development in automobile-oriented commercial corridors and centers; physical investments to enhance visual character and improve infrastructure; and transportation strategies to improve traffic circulation, provide for parking needs, and promote alternative travel modes. A new overlay district is proposed along Jericho Turnpike to focus more intense commercial development in “nodes” at major intersections and to encourage smaller-scale mixed uses between the nodes.

Implementation

Plans are turned into reality through concerted, coordinated, and consistent action over time. The final chapter of the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan describes how the Plan is to be used by the Town as a guide for policy, decision-making, and action. It contains:

- **Principles** to guide decision-making for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- An **Action Plan** that synthesizes the policies and strategies from the plan elements into short-term, mid-term, long-term, and ongoing actions.
- A protocol to **monitor progress** in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, including annual reviews and periodic updates to the Plan.

The Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan is intended as a working document that will guide the Town in making decisions, establishing priorities, and committing to actions that will positively shape the future of Huntington. By moving forward with the strategies and actions defined in the Plan, the Town can face the challenges of the new millennium with resolve and confidence, knowing that it is following a well-defined “game plan” designed to realize the Vision of Huntington that citizens aspire to for the future.

1

introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

1.2 Comprehensive Plan Process

1.3 Demographic Background and Guiding Principles

1.1 Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

Located along the northern shore of Long Island at the western edge of Suffolk County, the Town of Huntington, NY has a long and distinguished history. From the “First Purchase” of lands in Huntington from the Matinecock tribe in 1653 to Huntington’s early development as a maritime and farming community, establishment of rail service in the 19th century and highway access in the 20th century, and the post-World War II population boom, that history has been marked by continuing change. Over the last several decades Huntington has moved from an era of rapid growth with ample reserves of undeveloped land to become a largely built out suburban community for which preservation and enhancement of existing character have replaced growth as the primary planning focus. Looking towards the future, the challenges facing the Town will be: How do we maintain the high quality of life that our citizens enjoy? How do we preserve our remaining open spaces and our precious environmental resources? How do we manage future growth and redevelopment to meet the aspirations of our citizens? And, how does accelerating change in the 21st century affect our responses to these questions?

The Town has chosen to address these challenges by preparing a new Comprehensive Plan for Huntington’s unincorporated area. Adopted in 1993, Huntington’s last comprehensive plan addressed the transition from rapid growth in the 1950s and 1960s to a mature community, a transition that is now largely complete. Because many of the issues and recommendations of the 1993 Plan are still relevant today, that plan provided the starting point for the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update. However, the update goes beyond previous planning

efforts to set a new direction for Huntington’s future based on in current conditions and trends and input from citizens.

The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a common direction, framework, or “roadmap” that can be used to proactively manage future change. Specifically, the Plan provides the following:

1. An expression of citizens’ values and aspirations in the form of a shared “vision.”

Just as one would not begin a journey without first identifying a destination, the process of preparing the Comprehensive Plan Update began with citizens identifying through meetings, workshops, and other means the kind of place they would like Huntington to be. These citizen-based values and aspirations are the foundation for a collective vision of the Town’s future. Presented in Chapter 2 of the Plan, the Vision Statement defines citizens’ expectations and directions for the future; establishes the mandate for plan policies, strategies, and actions; and provides a benchmark against which to measure progress in implementing the plan.

2. A guide for decision-making.

The goals, policies, and strategies defined in the plan elements (Chapters 3 to 9 of the Plan) are based on a thorough evaluation of the Town’s present policies, initiatives, and regulations and how they need to be modified or new directions set to achieve the Vision Statement. While presented in separate elements, the goals, policies, and strategies are designed to work together to achieve the future vision.

As such, they should be used to inform short and long-term decision-making by town leaders, officials, and other members of the Huntington community on a continuing basis. Integration into town decision-making will result in significant adjustments to present policies, regulations, and investment priorities.

3. Huntington’s “To Do” list.

The Comprehensive Plan’s influence on Huntington’s future will be a product of the motivating power of its shared vision, and of the effectiveness of actions taken to realize the vision. The vision will not be achieved simply because citizens agree with the sentiments it expresses. Rather, it will be realized by steady progress in adhering to a well-defined “game plan” that sets priorities for effective short and long-term actions. Chapter 11 of the plan defines a program for town action designed to move the vision for the future of Huntington forward into reality.

It should be noted that all applicable state and town legal requirements, such as the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) and public noticing and input requirements, will continue to apply to capital investments, changes to zoning and development regulations, private development applications, and other projects proposed and reviewed by the Town. As noted, the Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for use by the Town with the input of citizens in making decisions on these projects.

1.2 Comprehensive Planning Process

The Comprehensive Plan Update has been prepared through a planning process consisting of three discrete phases, as follows:

1. Community Visioning: In this first phase of the process hundreds of citizens joined together to define a **Vision Statement** expressing the community's collective aspirations for the future of Huntington as they wish it to be in the years beyond 2020. A series of **key initiatives** was identified in conjunction with the Vision Statement as priorities for action by Town government. Citizens shaped the Vision Statement through input provided via community forums, stakeholder interviews, a telephone survey, and other means of communication. Presented in its entirety in Chapter 2, the Vision Statement was subsequently adopted by the Town Board.

Also as part of the first phase, a **Community Assessment** was prepared to characterize key conditions and trends related to growth and change in the Town of Huntington and to inform development of the Vision Statement. The Community Assessment evaluated existing plans and regulations; demographic and economic conditions and trends; the transportation system and other components of the Town's physical structure; and planned infrastructure improvements, development proposals, and other initiatives that are likely to significantly influence future growth and change. The following documents present the results of the Community Assessment and provide background for the Comprehensive Plan:

- *Demographic and Economic Analysis for the Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update*, prepared by Economics

Research Associates, April 2004.

- *Retail Market Analysis for Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update*, prepared by Economics Research Associates, April 2004.
- *Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update, Phase 1 Report: Community Visioning*, prepared by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC with Economics Research Associates and LSA Associates, November 2004.

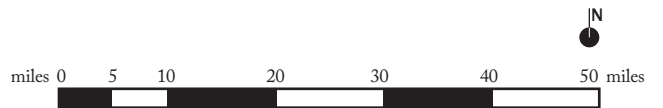
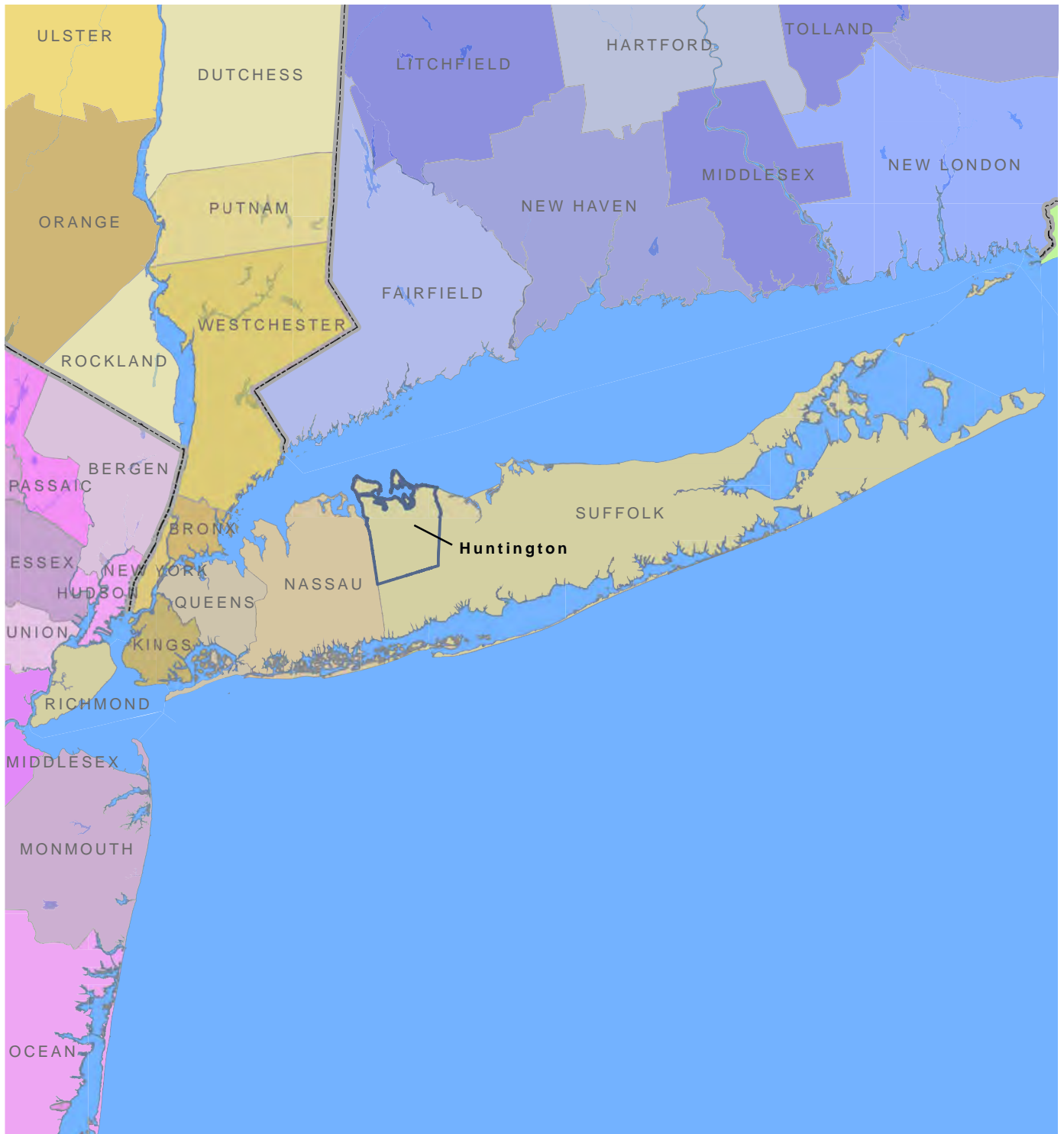
In addition, the Town of Huntington Department of Planning and Environment has prepared a Parks, Open Space & Environmental Resources Review as additional background for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

2. Policy and Strategy Development: In this phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update, a 26-member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC), comprised of citizen representatives from across the community, explored in detail the policy and strategy choices available to the Town to achieve the Vision Statement and key initiatives formulated in Phase 1. The CPAC deliberations resulted in Goals, Policies, and Strategies for each of seven topics: Environmental Resources and Open Space, Community Character, Community Facilities, Land Use, Economic Development, Transportation, and Housing. In addition, a Land Use Map was prepared to illustrate the desired general pattern of future land use in Huntington. The Goals, Policies, and Strategies were first prepared by CPAC in draft form for consideration by the citizens, stakeholders, and elected officials of the Town of Huntington and were sub-

sequently revised to address public comments received at two public informational meetings and during a thirty-day open comment period. The Goals, Policies, and Action Strategies Report was prepared in September 2006 to document the results of this phase of the comprehensive planning process.

3. Comprehensive Plan Preparation: In this phase, the results of the first two phases were refined and developed into the complete Comprehensive Plan document. This document includes the Vision Statement (Chapter 2); seven plan elements incorporating the Goals, Policies, and Strategies developed by the CPAC (Chapters 3 to 9); a chapter that applies the policies and strategies in more detail to "geographic focal areas" within the Town (Chapter 10); and an implementation program (Chapter 11). The implementation program defines the specific actions to be taken by the Town to realize the goals expressed by the Vision Statement and plan elements. In addition, a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) is being prepared in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan document as required by New York State's Environmental Quality Review Act.

Figure 1.1 Location Map



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

1.3 Demographic Background and Guiding Principles

The following overview of demographic conditions and trends in Huntington provides background and perspective on the issues addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update. In 1930, Huntington’s population (including incorporated villages) was 25,582, an increase of over 300% in 40 years. The 1933 Master Plan Report stated that it was not unreasonable to expect the Town’s population to increase at least another 100% in the next ten years due to the “increasing desirability” of Long Island for “the commuter, the vacationist, and the owner of country homes.” As shown in Table 1.1, however, this prediction did not come to pass, as the U.S. Census reported that the Town’s population was 47,506 in 1950.

construction boom. It was during this period that Huntington’s landscape was fundamentally transformed from the historic pattern of villages separated by farmland and other open spaces to a suburban community consisting primarily of single-family neighborhoods. From 1970 to 2000 Huntington’s population stabilized, increasing slightly from 1970 to 1980, declining more significantly from 1980 to 1990, and increasing again from 1990 to 2000, for an overall decrease of 3.1% during the thirty-year period. Population estimates prepared by the Long Island Power Authority indicate that Huntington’s population increased to 202,767 or 3.8% between 2000 and 2006, more than reversing the decline of the previous three decades. Long-term population estimates prepared by the Suffolk County Department of Planning project that Huntington’s population will reach 217,290 in 2030.

approximately 33% of Huntington’s population in 2000. All members of this generation will be senior citizens (over 65 years of age) by 2030.

- Huntington has not been able to attract and/or retain persons between 25 and 34 years in age. The number of residents in these combined age groups declined from 30,097 in 1990 to 23,442 in 2000, with the greatest decrease occurring in the 25–29 year age group.
- Huntington is becoming more ethnically diverse, with Hispanics constituting the largest and fastest growing minority group. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of Hispanic residents reported by the U.S. Census increased from 7,771 or 4.1% of the total population to 12,844 or 6.6% of the population.

These demographic factors have significant implications for planning for Huntington’s future, as do other issues highlighted in the plan elements (Chapters 3 to 10). Examples of these issues include the loss of open space and scarcity of undeveloped land resulting from Huntington’s maturation as a suburban community; quality of life impacts such as traffic congestion; and cost of living factors such as high taxes and housing prices. The policies, strategies, and actions recommended in this Comprehensive Plan Update are the results of a careful process of deliberation on the complex choices available to address these and similar issues, weighed against the public input received throughout the planning process.

While Huntington’s total population has not changed significantly since 1970 and is projected to experience only modest growth in the future, characteristics of the overall population are experiencing more significant change. Key trends include:

- The average size of a household in Huntington decreased from 3.59 persons in 1960 to 2.96 persons in 2000. This reflects a shift away from “traditional” households comprised of two parents with children to more singles, empty nesters, and other diverse household types.
- The Town’s population is getting older—median age increased from 30 years in 1960 to 39 years in 2000. Persons 65 years of age and over increased by 25% between 1990 and 2000. The “Baby Boom” generation (born between 1946 and 1964) represented

Table 1.1. Town of Huntington Population, 1950-2000

Year	Population
1950	47,506
1960	126,221
1970	199,486
1980	201,512
1990	191,474
2000	195,289

Source: U.S. Census

Figures include the incorporated villages of Asharoken, Huntington Bay, Lloyd Harbor, and Northport.

In the two decades between 1950 and 1970 Huntington’s population more than quadrupled in size to just under 200,000 persons as the Town experienced a post-World War II

They reflect three guiding principles:

1. Preserve those assets that exemplify Huntington's essential community character and quality of life. These include the Town's neighborhoods, villages, natural environment and remaining open spaces, history and heritage, arts, cultural life, and other assets.
2. Counteract trends that threaten community character and quality of life. Examples include escalating housing and school costs, visual blight along commercial corridors, limited variety of housing choices, negative environmental trends, and traffic congestion.
3. Implement strategies to maintain and enhance community assets and replace undesirable or obsolescent land uses with new ones that meet community needs, thus realizing the first and second principles.

Huntington stands at a key juncture in its history. How the Town responds to change during the time horizon of this plan will determine whether the high quality of life and community character its citizens cherish are maintained for future generations. This is the overriding purpose of the Comprehensive Plan: to enable the Town to manage change to achieve the future for Huntington that its citizens desire.

2

vision statement

2.1 Overview

2.2 Citizen Input

2.3 The Vision Statement

2.4 Realizing the Vision: Key Initiatives

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents a Vision Statement that defines the kind of place citizens want Huntington to be in the future. It is based on input received from citizens during Phase 1 of the comprehensive planning process (Community Visioning).

In considering the Vision Statement, it is important to understand its perspective, context, and role in the Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement expresses citizens' aspirations for the future of Huntington in the years beyond 2020. Because it describes the future as citizens choose for it to be, it is written from the perspective of someone in the future observing the character of Huntington and reflecting on the past nearly two decades of progress – progress guided by the goals, policies, and action strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement expresses citizens' collective values and motivations—*“what we intend Huntington to be”*—while the plan elements in Chapters 3 to 10 and the action plan in Chapter 11 set out in detail *what we must do to achieve the vision.*”

2.2 Citizen Input

The level of citizen involvement in providing the input needed to craft the Vision Statement was extraordinary, including:

- Approximately **150 community stakeholders**, representing key civic, business, environmental, and other organizations and interests, were interviewed for their perspectives on the major issues facing the Town.
- Over **500 citizens** participated in five community forums at which they identified present strengths, present weaknesses, future opportunities, and future threats facing the Town of Huntington in small group discussions.
- A random, statistically accurate telephone survey of over **300 citizens** throughout the Town was conducted as a further gauge of public opinion.
- Over **600 citizens** provided additional input via the Town's website, written survey, or other communication.

A second series of public meetings was conducted to review the Draft Vision Statement, which was subsequently adopted by the Town Board. The Community Visioning Report, prepared to conclude Phase 1 of the comprehensive planning process, provides more information on the Vision Statement, the process used to develop it, and the Community Assessment that was conducted concurrently with Vision Statement development.



2.3 The Vision Statement

In our **Vision of Huntington**, the Town's outstanding **quality of life** and **community character** are preserved and enhanced for this and future generations. It is these key attributes of the place that is Huntington, and our connectedness to it and to each other, which define our **shared identity** and unite us in civic pride.

The Town's **exceptional livability** and **distinctive character** have been achieved and maintained by preserving and building on our strengths, by addressing our shortcomings, and by making steady progress with a constant eye toward our shared vision for the future. Our success is the result of citizens, government, businesses, and institutions coming together in deliberate action to realize our collective vision of what Huntington can and should be. This action agenda has been strategically targeted towards four themes of the vision:

- Community Character
- Quality of Life
- Sustainable Community Structure
- Responsive Town Government



Community Character

- We carefully protect and maintain our **small-town, suburban character**: the diverse tapestry of **livable neighborhoods** and scenic, walkable **villages and hamlets** connected to parks, schools, and a variety of community activities.
- We honor our **rich heritage** by protecting and restoring our historic buildings, districts, and landmarks; and by interpreting Huntington's history for present and future generations.
- We preserve and enhance the Town's unique **aesthetic character and identity** by **setting high standards** for quality, by **protecting our neighborhoods and villages** from incompatible influences, and by continually enhancing our scenic corridors, open space network, public access to the waterfront, and civic facilities and landmarks.
- We practice responsible **stewardship of our natural environment**, safeguarding our beaches, marine and freshwater habitats, tree canopy, water and air quality, and other irreplaceable resources.



Quality Of Life

- Our schools, and the outstanding **quality of education** they offer, reflect the importance we place on nurturing our most important resources, our **children and youth**.
- Our vibrant **arts and cultural life**—museums, libraries, arts and cultural institutions, activities, and events—is a source of pride and shared experience for our diverse population.
- Our **parks and recreation** facilities and programs provide high quality leisure activities for residents of all ages, abilities, and interests.
- **Quality housing**, including a broader array of housing choices, is accessible to and affordable for households of different ages, lifestyles and economic means.
- Effective application and **enforcement of codes** and regulations has **eliminated problems of housing deterioration and overcrowding**.
- Increasing in **diversity**, Huntington is a **welcoming community** that invites newcomers of all cultures and backgrounds to participate in the civic life and economic prosperity of the community.
- We retain our tradition of **citizen involvement and volunteerism** with active



participation in a variety of neighborhood, arts and cultural, public safety, faith-based, and other community organizations, united by a commitment to enrich the lives of all citizens.

Sustainable Community Structure

- **New development and redevelopment** throughout Huntington is carefully managed to protect the character of neighborhoods, villages, and other established land use patterns; preserve open space; and set high standards for aesthetic quality.
- **Revitalized commercial corridors** support a more diversified mix of complementary,



community-serving uses to replace commercial strips and other undesired, underutilized, or obsolete development patterns, reflecting **high standards of quality** in architecture, site design, and landscaping.

- **Village and neighborhood commercial areas** serve as centers of community activity, retaining their pedestrian scale and character while incorporating carefully integrated shared parking to support a lively mix of shops and services.
- Our high quality of life, strategic location, and educated workforce attract a **diverse employment base**—ranging from quality large corporations to smaller locally-owned businesses and entrepreneurs—thus expanding the availability of well-paying jobs and strengthening the non-residential tax base.
- Our **accessible, well integrated transportation system** consists of:
 - › a roadway network with a high degree of **connectivity and convenience** and **reduced congestion** due to improved operational efficiency; and
 - › convenient **transit** (bus and rail), **bicycling**, and **pedestrian alternatives** to reliance on the automobile.
- Sustainable water, sewer, and stormwater **infrastructure systems** meet community needs while safeguarding **environmental quality** and the quality of our drinking water supply.

Responsive Town Government

- Town government retains its reputation for prudent **fiscal management**, while providing an array of **exceptional public**

services, programs and facilities to meet the needs of citizens for public safety, recreation, transportation, and cultural enrichment.

- Town government provides **leadership in managing growth and change** through wise investments and effective application and **enforcement of codes and development regulations** that are clear, consistent, and which set high standards.
- Town government supports and coordinates with local school districts to ensure continued efficiency and outstanding **quality of local schools**.
- The constructive dialog practiced by Town and community leadership is a model for **civil discourse** by citizens to achieve consensus on challenging issues.
- Town government is **responsive** to citizen concerns and encourages citizens to become well-informed and involved by affording a wide variety of opportunities for active **participation in civic affairs**.
- The Town has taken a leadership role in promoting greater **intergovernmental coordination** with federal, state, and county governments, adjacent towns, and our four villages.



2.4 Realizing the Vision: Key Initiatives

To set the stage for turning the Vision Statement into reality, a series of bold **key initiatives** have been identified to set priorities for action by Town government. These initiatives provide direction for the strategies identified in the plan elements (Chapters 3 to 10) and the actions identified in implementation plan (Chapter 11). They respond directly to the priorities identified by citizens through the various means of public involvement during Phase 1 of the planning process. The key initiatives are:

Traffic Circulation

Work with state and county agencies to **retrofit the road network** with state-of-the-art signalization and other targeted improvements to enhance operational efficiency and **reduce traffic congestion**.

Open Space Preservation

Continue to expand the network of permanently **reserved open space** and improve the protection of sensitive environmental resources, such as groundwater supply.

Housing

Alleviate substandard housing conditions, while promoting a more **diverse housing** stock affordable to all income groups.



Development Quality

“Raise the bar” on development quality and sustainability through standards tailored to retain and complement the unique identity of the Town’s diverse neighborhoods, villages, and commercial areas, while addressing environmental, traffic, and other impacts.

Commercial Corridors

Improve the **aesthetic character and viability of commercial corridors** through design standards and actions to promote revitalization and redevelopment of undesirable and obsolete development patterns with appropriate uses.

Sustainable Huntington

Mobilize a community-wide initiative to achieve a more **sustainable future** for the Town of Huntington, through measures that conserve energy, reduce carbon emissions, and promote a healthy environment.

3

environmental resources and open space

3.1 Overview

3.2 Summary of Key Issues

3.3 Policies and Strategies

Goals

- 1. Protect Huntington's environmental resources and natural systems.**
- 2. Preserve a town-wide network of open space and greenways.**
- 3. Provide excellent parks and recreation facilities that meet the needs of Huntington's residents.**

3.1 Overview

Parks, open space, and environmental resources are key to Huntington's quality of life, scenic character, and to its very ability to sustain itself as a viable community. Collectively they form what has been termed **green infrastructure**—a natural life support system that performs functions essential to the Town's environmental quality, community health, and economy.

A detailed report on Huntington's parks, open space, and recreational resources has been prepared by the Town's Department of Planning and Environment in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan. The following text provides an overview of issues related to these resources. Section 3.1.1 identifies community needs related to Huntington's environmental resources, such as wetlands, ground and surface waters, floodplains, steep slopes, and natural habitat areas. It also addresses the role that Huntington can play in counteracting broader environmental trends such as global warming. Section 3.1.2 summarizes the current status of protected open space in Huntington and town programs to protect additional open space. Section 3.1.3 addresses parks and recreational facilities as an important component of the Town's overall open space system.

3.1.1 Environmental Resources

Located on Long Island's north shore, the Town of Huntington has benefited from the abundant environmental resources of Long Island Sound throughout its history. The Town's early economy was based on the bountiful waters of the Long Island Sound and its associated harbors. In upland areas, glaciers deposited fertile, well-drained soils that were ripe for agriculture. To this day, the Town's

natural systems, wetlands, and surface waters provide natural habitat for many wildlife species, absorb stormwater runoff, and help to cleanse air and water. Because these resources are so important to Huntington's quality of life and community health, the Town must endeavor to conserve them for the future through measures such as land acquisition, regulations, and low-impact development practices. The Town has regulations in place to protect resources such as steep slopes and wetlands, but additional provisions could be enacted to strengthen the existing regulations and to protect other resources such as groundwater recharge areas and waterway buffers.

Environmental resource protection depends on having a complete, up-to-date resource inventory. Figure 3.1 illustrates environmental resource areas in Huntington for which information is available through the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) database. The Town should continue to update its GIS database relating to environmental resources, including information such as:

- Wetlands, waterways, watersheds, and Coastal Fish and Wildlife surveys.
- Water recharge areas/hydrogeologic management and contributing well zones.
- Steep slopes.
- Prime agricultural soils.
- Protected land resources.
- Brownfields and remedial sites.

Such data is needed to inform the review of proposed development applications and provide a foundation for resource-based land use management and regulation.

Groundwater is a precious resource on which the Town of Huntington and all of Long Island depends for drinking water supply.

Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Environmental Quality

- Preserves natural resources, such as wetlands, steep slopes, and natural vegetation.
- Recharges and protects the quality of surface and ground waters.
- Provides natural stormwater management services, including flood protection, erosion control, and pollution reduction.
- Reduces energy use and captures carbon dioxide, thus helping to counteract global climate change.
- Conserves native communities and provides habitat for rare and endangered species.

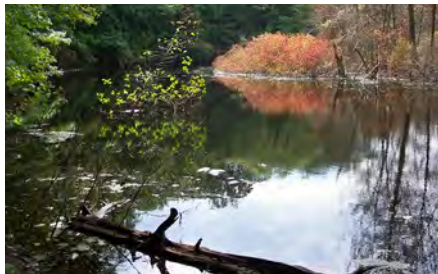
Community Health

- Cleanses the air we breathe and the water we drink.
- Promotes outdoor recreation and exercise through activities such as walking and biking.
- Brings people into contact with nature.

A Sustainable Economy

- Strengthens the economy through improved quality of life and increased property values.
- Conserves resources that support economic activity.
- Reduces costs associated with engineered "gray infrastructure" systems (stormwater, wastewater, etc.).

The Town participated in preparation of the 1992 Long Island Comprehensive Special Groundwater Protection Area (SGPA) Plan under the authority of New York State ECL Article 55 (Sole Source Aquifer Protection). SPGAs are defined as “recharge watershed area(s) within a designated sole source area... which (are) particularly important for the maintenance of large volumes of high quality groundwater for long periods of time.” Huntington contains two portions of two SPGAs: West Hills/Melville in the western part of the Town and two much smaller portions of the Oak Brush Plains SPGA in the southeastern corner of the Town. Most of the Town’s public water supply wells are located outside of these SPGAs. Unlike towns such as Oyster Bay, Huntington has not enacted overlay regulations to protect groundwater resources within its SPGAs.



Suffolk County is currently preparing a Comprehensive Water Management Plan to guide management and protection of drinking water supplies in the County. This plan will project future water demand, update the groundwater model to include additional wells and increased withdrawals to meet projected demand, and provide policy and action recommendations. Increased nitrate levels in some public water supply wells are an issue of concern being addressed by the plan.

Potential threats to Huntington’s groundwater resources include point and nonpoint pollution sources such as “brownfield” sites that are contaminated with toxic chemicals, sewage disposal systems and treatment plants, and stormwater runoff from roads and parking lots. The Town is using state funding to evaluate the feasibility of cleaning up and restoring potential brownfield sites in the Huntington Station area to productive use.

Huntington’s key environmental resources include the shoreline, tidal wetlands, and waters of the Long Island Sound. These resources are addressed in two documents prepared by the Town under New York State’s Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act: the 2000 Huntington Harbor Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and the 2005 Draft LWRP for All Unincorporated Areas. Consistent with the Long Island Sound Coastal Zone Management Program, these documents contain policies designed to protect environmental resources, promote water-dependent and compatible uses, and provide for public access to and recreational use of Huntington’s waterfront.

Huntington’s tree canopy is another important environmental resource. Trees provide many benefits, such as natural means of cooling, air and water quality improvement, and stormwater management; wildlife habitat; visual amenity; and increased property values.

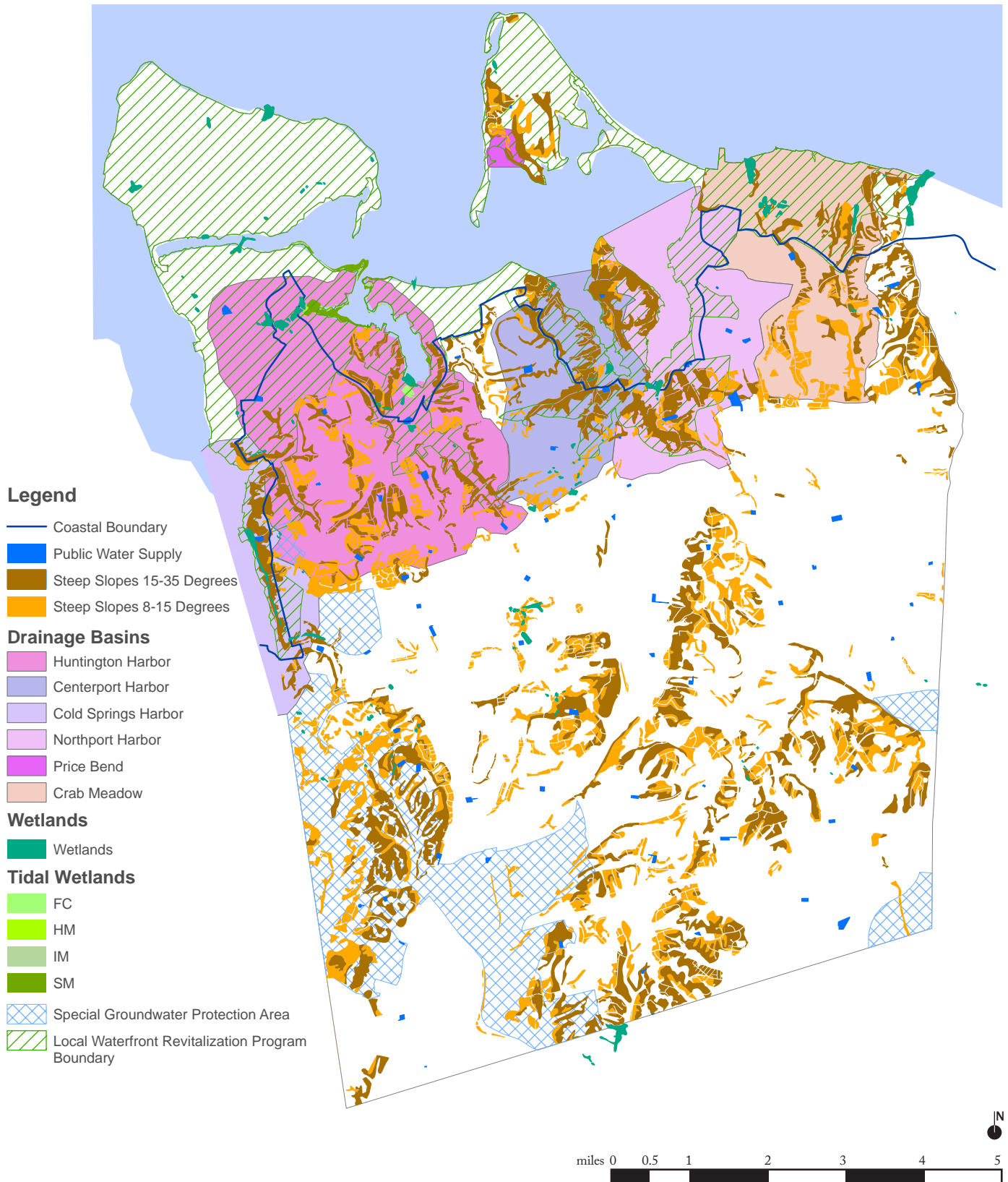


The Town of Huntington was recognized as a Tree City for many consecutive years under the Tree City USA Program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation, USDA Forest Service, and National Association of State Foresters, but has not pursued this designation recently. As part of a coordinated effort to enhance its tree canopy, the Town should follow the required steps to allow it to again be recognized as a Tree City. Other potential components of a tree canopy enhancement program include strengthening the Town’s tree ordinance, updating and extending the Town’s inventory of trees it owns and manages, improving management of trees in parks and other public properties, and promoting a community-wide tree management and planting initiative.

Huntington has an exceptional collection of natural systems, habitats, and indigenous plant and animal species, many of them associated with existing passive parks managed by the Town. The Town has never had a comprehensive botanical inventory of its property holdings, although several volunteer and university studies were done in the 1970s. A comprehensive survey or **biodiversity index** is needed to properly document these resources, including prime occurrences, threatened elements, and invasive species incursions. This index will provide a systematic and scientific foundation for strategies and actions to preserve biodiversity—the variety of ecosystems and species of plants and animals found in Huntington—including best management options for resources within passive town parks.

Environmental issues facing the Town of Huntington extend beyond the need to protect natural resources to the broader impacts

Figure 3.1 Environmental Resources



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

of humans on the environment. With the growing awareness of trends such as global climate change, every effort should be made to increase recycling and utilization of renewable resources, while diminishing the “carbon footprint” of town facilities.¹ In 2005 Huntington joined several other Suffolk County municipalities in adopting a Clean Energy Action Plan. In 2006 the Town was awarded a federal grant to purchase hybrid fuel vehicles and one 100% electrically-powered passenger bus for its fleet.

“Green building” that incorporates energy conservation and other techniques to reduce the environmental impacts of new construction or renovation is increasing in popularity throughout the nation. The Town should support, recognize, and encourage initiatives to obtain LEED™ (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.² As an example, the Town Board conducted a public hearing in July 2008 on legislation that requires commercial projects at least 4,000 square feet in size to meet LEED™ standards. The Town has taken other steps to promote energy conservation, such as the provision of free commuter and beach parking for residents who own hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles; fast tracking building permit review for solar installations; and requiring new homes to meet Energy Star Standards.³

Improving citizen awareness through public outreach and communications is a key to promoting better stewardship of Huntington’s environmental resources. “Sustainable Huntington”—one of the six key initiatives proposed by the Comprehensive Plan—is intended to mobilize awareness and action by citizens to achieve a more sustainable future.

3.1.2 Open Space and Greenways

The Town of Huntington has expanded its inventory of protected open spaces through a variety of land acquisition programs. Figure 3.2 shows the overall distribution of open spaces within the Town. At present, dedicated open space comprises over 6,200 acres that are fairly evenly distributed across the four quadrants of the Town, although the southwest quadrant (Melville area) has a lesser amount of active recreational acreage. The 1993 Comprehensive Plan identified 17 priority properties for acquisition. To date, all or part of 12 identified properties have been secured in public ownership or protected by conservation easement. Despite this progress, the existing tools and resources available to the Town may not be sufficient to protect all of the important remaining open space as development pressures continue. A variety of approaches should be explored, ranging from outright acquisition, conservation easements, and limited development to regulatory techniques such as conservation developments and minimum open space set-asides (dedications) in new developments.

The Town of Huntington was one of the first municipalities on Long Island to develop an Open Space Index that mapped the most significant privately-held open lands as a basis for setting acquisition priorities. An update to this index is needed to determine the best remaining opportunities to protect valuable open space resources. Within the framework set by the Open Space Index, the Town should continue an acquisition prioritization program that allows flexibility to shift funding to projects in a timely fashion (e.g., to address imminent development threats).

The Town’s remaining open space resources can be classified into the following categories:

- Natural Open Space (primarily located on “underdeveloped” properties)
- Agricultural Open Space
- Recreational Open Space
- Institutional Open Space
- Relief Open Space

Natural Open Space

There is very little vacant land remaining in the Town of Huntington that is truly natural and undeveloped. Much of the remaining privately held natural open space exists on already subdivided parcels and large estates. As the last remaining sites are proposed for subdivision, applicants should be provided with the opportunity to consider potential development alternatives that can preserve open space resources. Regulations should be updated and expanded to incorporate specific tools such as conservation subdivisions into the Town Code.

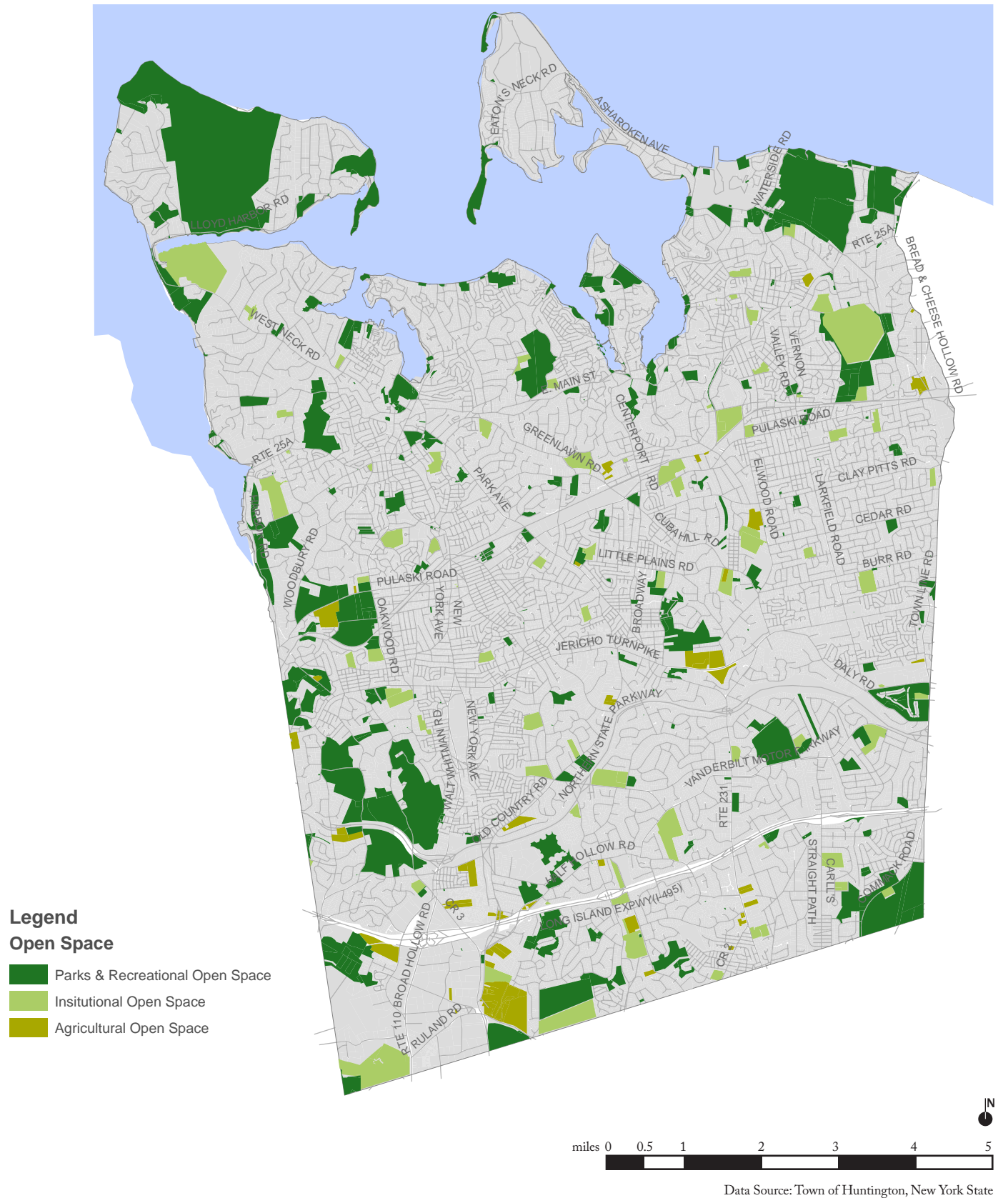


¹ Carbon footprint is defined as a “measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide.” (www.carbonfootprint.com)

² Administered by the U.S. Green Building Council, the LEED™ rating system is the most widely known and accepted green building certification program.

³ Energy Star is a program managed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with the assistance of the Department of Energy that establishes voluntary energy efficiency standards for new homes.

Figure 3.2 Open Space



Recreational Open Space

Recreational open space includes day camps, golf courses, playing fields, and commercial recreational facilities. The continued operation of day camps, golf courses, and riding schools should be encouraged and they should be considered key priorities for acquisition by the Town should their continued use be threatened. Partnership opportunities in which the Town makes use of day camp sites during slow periods of the year could be explored.



Agricultural Open Space

Extensive residential and commercial development during the last several decades has dramatically reduced the amount of agricultural land in Huntington. Between 1968 and 1996, the amount of land in agricultural use declined from 4,170 to 1,294 acres. The remaining agricultural lands are surrounded by



developed properties and several owners are pursuing options to develop their properties or sell their development rights. The Town has sought to acquire development rights on agricultural lands, but these efforts have been difficult to date due to high land values. Recently the Town Board authorized a contract to acquire the Town's first agricultural development rights, in cooperation with Suffolk County, on 15 acres of Richter's Orchard in Fort Salonga. Suffolk County has purchased development rights on two other properties totaling 50 acres.

Institutional Open Space

Land held by government agencies, school districts, and religious and service organizations can include significant amounts of open space. For example, the 382-acre former Long Island Developmental Center in Dix Hills was sold into private ownership and developed as The Greens at Half Hollow. The conditions of rezoning approval for this property included dedication of 31 acres of parkland to the Town of Huntington and development of recreational facilities. Other lands released by the state include properties originally acquired by the Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) for roadways that were never built. The former Bethpage Parkway Extension lands were converted into parkland in the Cold Spring Harbor area, but in the case of the former Northport-Babylon Expressway the Town and County had to reacquire land that had been abandoned by the state. A consistent policy should be established to preserve such lands as open space and for community trails use, which is consistent with the Long Island Non-Motorized Transportation Plan co-sponsored by NYSDOT and the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. Cooperation with the

state and other governmental property holders should provide towns with the right of first refusal to purchase properties with potential open space value before they are auctioned to private land owners.

Relief Open Space

This type of open space includes the small and distinctive places that provide respite, visual relief, and places for residents to gather in more developed parts of the Town, such as hamlet centers and along major roadway corridors. These spaces can anchor surrounding development, establish visual gateways and transitions between uses, and accommodate community activities such as small-scale recreation. Relief open spaces will not necessarily be mapped ahead of time, but will be planned as part of development, redevelopment, or corridor improvement projects.



3.1.3 Parks and Recreational Facilities

Parks and recreational facilities are an important component of the Town's overall open space system. Because they are so well used, they are also the parts of the open space system that are most visible to the public. Active parkland comprises approximately 14% of the 6,200 park acres in the Town, including 53 of 135 parks. The Huntington Environmental Open Space and Park Fund (EOSPA) has allowed the Town to acquire new recreational lands and to upgrade recreational facilities in the parks, such as the funding related to the installation of five full-size synthetic turf athletic fields. Since the 1993 Comprehensive Plan, demand for field use has gone up considerably—particularly due to the creation of new youth sport leagues.

Many of the Town's planned improvements to existing parks are recreational in nature. Synthetic turf athletic fields are among the new facilities under development at Manor Field Park, Breezy Park, and the Veterans Park Complex. Veterans Park will also include several new ball fields, a trails network, and a concrete skate park. Ice skating and roller hockey rinks are being added or renovated in other parks.

Looking forward, the Town should stay ahead of recreational trends by proactively identifying the needs of Town residents. The last community recreation survey was conducted 20 years ago in conjunction with the 1988 Parks and Recreation Study. Since that time, recreational interests have shifted and new trends have emerged that could correlate to desire for a different assortment of facilities and programs. Changing recreational preferences place pressures on different parts of the park system, ranging from athletic fields to beaches, where new recreational facilities have been built for beach volleyball, windsurfing, and aerobics programs. The population of seniors and persons with disabilities are growing and will also need to be served with appropriate recreational facilities and programs. A new community survey should be conducted as part of an updated parks and recreation plan to define present and future community needs and strategies to meet them. The updated plan should address demands for parks and recreational facilities in areas that are currently underserved or have experienced growth, such as Melville. Strategies to meet citizens' needs should include partnerships with local school districts and other public and private providers of recreational facilities and programs.

The demand for active recreation is growing in part because new developments typically include only passive open space. The Town has pursued creative measures to establish new facilities to meet this demand. For example, the Greens at Half Hollow include a community recreation facility with soccer fields and a concessions building as a condition of rezoning approval.

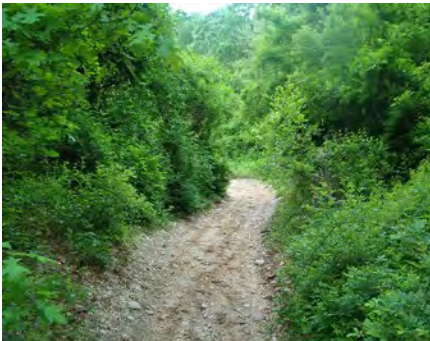
As awareness of healthy lifecycle choices grows, walking, hiking, and jogging have become extremely popular forms of recreation for Huntington's residents. Therefore, a network of trails and greenways as part of the Town's overall open space system is increasingly important to accommodate these activities. A Huntington Greenways and Trails Plan and Map should be developed to:

- Identify existing and proposed greenways and trail links.
- Establish policies for expanding the trail system and improving connectivity.
- Incorporate recommendations of the Long Island Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.
- Prioritize park and non-park sites for trails development.



Adequate funding and staff resources are critical to meeting community needs for park, recreation, and open space acquisition, development, and maintenance. The Town has raised revenue for environmental resource and open space projects through the Environmental Open Space and Park Improvement Fund (EOSPA). Two EOSPA bond programs have been passed by voters – the first in 1998 for \$15 million and the second in 2003 for \$30 million. So far, the EOSPA program has supported 24 acquisition projects totaling 214.2 acres and improvements at 60 Town parks through projects ranging from athletic field replacements to picnic facilities. It has been five years since the most recent EOSPA bond was approved and there is a definite need to continue the revenue stream of the 1998 bond, which expires in 2008. In extending this program, the Town should continue its open space acquisition efforts while committing increased funding to park improvement and neighborhood enhancement projects.

Another important issue for Huntington's parks and recreational facilities is the reduction in maintenance staff that has occurred over the years. With the physical growth in parkland through EOSPA acquisitions, new programs, and expanded maintenance needs, increased staffing and operational budgets will be needed if the Town is to maintain the quality of service that residents have come to expect.



Volunteer and partnership programs can contribute to meeting park and open space resource needs. The Huntington Park Stewardship Program—renowned throughout Long Island—should be sustained and encouraged. Through this program, the Town Board appoints volunteer park stewards that serve as the Town's eyes and ears in the field. The stewards bring information and ideas via inspection reports back to the Town's Conservation Board, which distributes the reports to the appropriate town departments. Specialized stewardship and "friends" groups; volunteer initiatives through service organizations, scouts, and businesses; and private sponsorships and donations are other resources potentially available to support Huntington's park and open space system.

3.2 Summary of Key Issues

The Town of Huntington has been proactive in planning to secure and protect parks, open space, and environmental resources. However, opportunities for further protection are limited as the Town approaches build-out. Key issues that need to be addressed include:

- Action is needed to preserve the best remaining open spaces and potential park sites before they are lost to development.
- The Town will need to shift from primarily an “expansion” to a “management” mode that focuses on stewardship, compatible use, and management of its protected lands inventory to meet citizens’ needs.
- A current assessment of citizens’ needs for parks and recreational facilities should be conducted and strategies to meet these needs should be developed.
- Increasing access to parks must remain a priority. There is particular demand for open space in older, settled parts of the community as well as those that are experiencing growth, such as Huntington Station and Melville, respectively.
- Regulations could be strengthened and other approaches explored to better preserve open space and protect environmentally sensitive resources.
- Stewardship should involve public education to build understanding of the importance of environmental resources and the role citizens can play in creating a more sustainable future for the Town of Huntington.
- Additional fiscal and human resources—including extension of EOSPA Program funding—are needed to support park and open space acquisition, development, and management.

- Public-private partnerships will be essential to build capacity to achieve goals such as meeting recreational needs, securing important open lands, and promoting environmental stewardship.

Section 3.3 lays out policies and strategies to address these key issues. Policies A.1 to A.6 address protection of Huntington’s environmental resources and natural systems (Environmental Resources and Open Space Goal 1). Policies A.7 to A.9 address establishment of a town-wide network of open space and greenways (Goal 2). Policies A.10 to A.14 address the provision of parks and recreational facilities to meet citizens’ needs (Goal 3).

3.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy A.1

Strengthen protection of sensitive environmental resources by applying best management practices through Huntington's development regulations.

Strategies

A.1.1 Improve protection of wetlands.

- Enact regulatory controls such as building setbacks, limits on clearing, and excluding wetlands from lot area calculations in new subdivisions.
- Explore the possibility of assuming regulatory authority for wetlands through appropriately trained town staff with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.
- Inventory freshwater wetlands that are not regulated under Article 24 of the State Environmental Conservation Law and develop town regulations to protect them.

A.1.2 Enact overlay district regulations with standards to reduce the groundwater impacts of uses within Special Groundwater Protection Areas and consider overlay districts for other well field recharge areas.

A.1.3 Explore opportunities to improve regulatory protection of other sensitive resources (steep slopes, floodplains, significant natural habitat areas, etc.).

A.1.4 Apply appropriate environmental criteria (e.g., sensitivity and extent of natural features, implications for water resources) in regulating development intensity/density.

A.1.5 Require/encourage alternative site design standards (e.g., conservation subdivisions⁴ and lot averaging⁵ techniques) to better preserve natural areas on a tract.

A.1.6 Require minimum open space acreage (e.g., 20-30%) within new developments (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.8).

A.1.7 Address staffing implications of strengthened environmental regulations.

Policy A.2

Protect Huntington's water resources.

Strategies

A.2.1 Actively participate in the Suffolk County Comprehensive Water Management Plan with the goal of maintaining existing and future water supply and wellsite viability in the Town of Huntington.

A.2.2 Coordinate the Town's open space acquisition program (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.7) with the groundwater supply needs of the public water providers.

A.2.3 Require/encourage stormwater management practices that minimize impacts on surface water, groundwater, and other natural resources, e.g.:

- Filtering and recharge designs for stormwater management facilities that blend into the existing landscape.

⁴ Conservation subdivisions are a form of residential development that reduces lot sizes so as to set aside a substantial amount of the property as permanently protected open space. This concept differs from "Cluster Development" in a number of ways, particularly in its higher standards for the quantity, quality, and configuration of the resulting open space.

⁵ Lot averaging refers to varying of lot sizes based upon environmental conditions, with the requirement that the overall development conform to an average rather than minimum lot size.

- Use of pervious surfacing to reduce runoff.

A.2.4 Explore innovative options for on-site sewage disposal with the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (DHS) to protect groundwater quality and permit development forms that meet other Comprehensive Plan related goals.

A.2.5 Encourage the Suffolk County DHS to develop an on-lot sewage disposal system inspection and maintenance program to ensure that these systems are operating properly.

A.2.6 Enact vegetated buffer and setback requirements for riparian corridors to help protect streams, tidal wetlands, and other surface waters.

A.2.7 Identify brownfield sites (abandoned underground storage tanks, former industrial properties, sites where hazardous materials may have been stored, etc.) that have the potential to be cleaned up and reclaimed for productive uses (public open space, private development, etc.) under New York State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program.⁶

A.2.8 Implement the recommendations of the Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for the protection of coastal water resources (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.3).

A.2.9 Explore opportunities to upgrade levels of treatment in existing sewage treatment plants and to partner with other communities to increase Huntington's sewage treatment capacity.

Policy A.3

Protect and enhance Huntington's coastal areas.

Strategies

A.3.1 Implement the policies and associated actions of the Huntington Harbor Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and the Draft LWRP for All Unincorporated Areas:

1. Foster a pattern of development that enhances community character, preserves open space, makes efficient use of infrastructure, makes beneficial use of a coastal location, and minimizes adverse impacts of development.
2. Preserve historic resources.
3. Enhance visual quality and protect scenic resources.
4. Minimize loss of life, structures, and natural resources from flooding and erosion.
5. Protect and improve water quality and supply.
6. Protect and restore the quality and function of coastal ecosystems.
7. Protect and improve air quality.
8. Minimize environmental degradation from solid waste and hazardous substances and wastes.

⁶ The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program provides municipalities and community-based organizations with funding (up to 90% of eligible costs) to complete revitalization plans and implementation strategies for areas or communities affected by the presence of brownfield sites, and site assessments for strategic sites.

9. Provide for public access to and recreational use of coastal waters, public lands, and public resources in the coastal area.
10. Protect water-dependent uses and promote siting of new water-dependent uses in suitable locations.
11. Promote sustainable use of living marine resources, including commercial and recreational use of finfish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine plants.

Policy A.4

Maintain Huntington's mature trees and tree canopy

Strategies

A.4.1 Strengthen the Town's grading regulations (Article XII – Excavations; Topsoil Removal) to better protect mature vegetation and encourage developers to utilize the latest techniques to maximize tree preservation.

A.4.2 Strengthen the Town's Tree Ordinance to minimize tree removal and require strong tree replacement standards.

A.4.3 Create a townwide "Green Huntington" tree management and planting program, enlisting both public and private support.

- Re-establish Huntington as a "Tree City" under the Tree City USA Program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation, USDA Forest Service, and National Association of State Foresters.
- Update and extend the inventory of trees to all properties owned and managed by the Town.
- Enhance tree planting and maintenance of town landscapes (streets, parks, and other public places) and provide the Town's Urban Forester with professional management responsibility for all town trees (not just street trees).
- Initiate partnerships with community organizations, institutions, and other groups to promote tree planting on non town-owned properties.
- Work with the Long Island Power Authority and other utility companies to minimize potential damage to trees in proximity to overhead and underground utility lines.
- Establish tree planting and maintenance guidelines for public places and private properties (spacing, species selection, proper care, etc.) and disseminate information as an educational tool for private use.

Policy A.5

Permanently preserve Huntington's unique environmental resources.

Strategies

A.5.1 Develop a town-wide biodiversity inventory and incorporate it into the Town's Open Areas Information System (OASIS).

A.5.2 Permanently protect lands with highly valuable environmental resources (biodiversity areas, Critical Environmental Areas, habitats identified by the New York Natural Heritage Program, etc.) through fee simple acquisition, easements, or other conservation techniques.

A.5.3 Promote protection of native species and prevention/removal of invasive species.

Policy A.6

Provide citizen educational programs on environmental stewardship, the interrelationships of natural systems, and the need for a sustainable environment.

Strategies

A.6.1 Prepare and distribute newsletters and other materials on environmental issues (e.g., information on wetlands and other environmental regulations that apply to private properties).

A.6.2 Develop and implement a “Sustainable Community” initiative, building on programs such as the Pink Flag - I Am Fed Naturally campaign⁷ and other green initiatives that promote desirable goals such as the use of alternative and hybrid fuel vehicles.

A.6.3 Encourage the use of green building and environmentally sensitive construction principles that promote positive environmental benefits, such as reduced energy consumption and waste generation.

A.6.4 Promote grassroots initiatives such as park stewards, waterfront/stream cleanups, community gardens, and ecological restoration/planting projects.

A.6.5 Work with environmental groups that have strong local chapters in these efforts.

Policy A.7

Continue to strengthen Huntington’s public open space acquisition program.

Strategies

A.7.1 Update and implement recommendations from the Open Areas Information System (OASIS) and Open Space Index and expand tracking ability through town-wide GIS support.

A.7.2 Build on the Environmental Open Space and Park Fund (EOSPA) criteria adopted by Town Board to further prioritize open space acquisitions, e.g.:

- Develop a system of conservation reserves connected by natural linkages .
- Preserve environmentally sensitive resources (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.5).
- Establish/enlarge central green spaces within existing villages and development centers.
- Maintain scenic assets and resource-based traditional economies (agriculture, shell fishing).

A.7.3 Identify opportunities to acquire previously developed properties in strategic locations to build the townwide open space network.

A.7.4 Commit additional bonding for open space land acquisition through the Environmental Open Space and Park Fund.

⁷ Sponsored by the Town of Huntington and the Breast Cancer Action Coalition, the Pink Flag – I Am Fed Naturally campaign encourages homeowners to reduce or eliminate the use of toxic chemicals on their lawns and gardens.

A.7.5 Leverage town funds for open space acquisition by tapping other sources (state, county and private grants, etc.).

A.7.6 Explore the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) to acquire full or partial development rights on selected properties in priority preservation areas to augment the current fee simple acquisition program.

Policy A.8

Preserve open space within new developments.

Strategies

A.8.1 Require a minimum open space set aside (e.g., 20-30%) within new developments, together with standards to ensure that the open space is meaningful (e.g., central greens or greenway linkages) and publicly accessible.

A.8.2 Encourage voluntary open space dedications through conservation subdivisions (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.1).

Policy A.9

Leverage public and private resources to create the townwide open space and greenway network.

Strategies

A.9.1 Work with private landowners and non-profit land conservation organizations (e.g., the North Shore Land Alliance) to protect privately owned open space through techniques such as conservation easements and limited development options.

A.9.2 Implement a Transfer of Density Flow Rights (TDFR) Program to preserve open space by restoring the density permitted by existing zoning on properties affected by the Suffolk County Sanitary Code.⁸

A.9.3 Investigate use of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)⁹ program enabled by Town Code to preserve open space.

Identify sending sites to be preserved as open space (e.g., properties identified in the OASIS Open Space Index/Town Protection Priority Listing)

Identify TDR receiving sites to be developed with increased density (e.g., suitable locations within existing sewer districts with available capacity)

A.9.4 Consider establishing a municipal development rights bank to promote the TDR program, support projects of public benefit, and provide additional funding for open space acquisition.¹⁰

A.9.5 Evaluate properties owned by the Town and other public agencies for opportunities to dedicate open space.

A.9.6 Work with Huntington's private owners of substantial undeveloped property to explore preservation and recreation opportunities.

⁸ The Suffolk County Sanitary Code requires lots with on-site sewage disposal systems to be 20,000 square feet or greater within designated "Hydrological Management Zones" even if they are zoned for higher density by the Town of Huntington (e.g., minimum 15,000 square foot lots in the R-15 zone, minimum 10,000 square foot lots in the R-10 zone, etc.). A Transfer of Density Flow Rights Program would restore the density allowed by current zoning by transferring development rights from other properties to be preserved as open space. By so doing it would result in a net reduction in the density that would be otherwise permitted by the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Policy A.10

Maintain and promote Huntington's parks and recreational facilities.

Strategies

A.10.1 Develop management plans for Huntington's public parks and open spaces, addressing issues such as:

- Maintenance of facilities and landscapes, including lifecycle replacement.
- Safety and security.
- Hiking and biking trail access and linkage.
- Natural resource preservation/restoration, including control of invasive species.
- Development of a GIS database of park features as a management tool.

A.10.2 Develop a public awareness program to promote Huntington's parks and recreation areas.

- Develop and disseminate additional materials to make citizens aware of the opportunities available in the Town's parks and open spaces, their importance to quality of life, and their allowable uses.
- Publish a Huntington Trail Map.

A.10.3 Establish a new zoning district or districts to reinforce the status and function of Huntington's open space/recreation resources.

- Create a new public open space/recreation zoning category and rezone all parkland in Huntington to that classification.
- Consider establishing additional zoning categories to address valuable open space lands held privately and by governmental agencies.

A.10.4 Conduct a comprehensive encroachment study of all of Huntington's parkland and define encroachment policy/penalties that will support remedial activities as necessary or facilitate further open space acquisition efforts.

A.10.5 Integrate "best environmental practices" (energy and water conservation measures, use of recycled materials, organic landscaping practices, etc.) into management of Huntington's parks and recreational facilities to reduce environmental impacts.

Policy A.11

Develop a "Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan" that defines the needs of Huntington's citizens for parks and recreational facilities and identifies strategies to meet those needs.

Strategies

A.11.1 Update Huntington's 1988 Parks and Recreation Study.

A.11.2 Conduct a citizen survey of local recreation utilization and preferences.

A.11.3 Develop strategies to meet needs for different types of parks and recreational facilities geographically distributed throughout the Town, including but not limited to:

⁹ TDR is a regulatory technique designed to protect sensitive land areas by allowing the development rights on properties in designated "sending zones" to be transferred to properties in designated "receiving zones," which are allowed to be developed at a higher density than would otherwise be permitted by the underlying zoning.

¹⁰ A municipal development rights bank involves acquisition of development rights by the Town through a PDR program (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Action Strategy A.6.6) and reselling those rights to developers who implement Huntington's planning goals.

- Traditional active and passive outdoor recreation.
- Emerging and newly popular recreational activities.
- Indoor multi-use facilities.
- Specialized “whole access” facilities for disabled residents.

A.11.4 Pursue joint use of recreational facilities owned by school districts and other recreational providers.

Policy A.12

Meet the growing need for active recreational playing fields.

Strategies

A.12.1 Work with community athletic associations and leagues to identify service areas, age distribution, and field-size needs.

A.12.2 Extend usefulness of existing fields with synthetic surfaces or new field configurations.

A.12.3 Partner with public and private institutions and corporations to identify possible locations for new fields.

A.12.4 Identify suitable locations for new fields as part of comprehensive parks and recreation planning (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.11).

A.12.5 Encourage private sector development of recreational facilities to help meet demand for playing fields.

Policy A.13

Improve access to Huntington’s open space and recreation areas.

Strategies

A.13.1 Develop a town-wide bikeway and pedestrian trail network.

- Appoint a Huntington Trails Committee as defined in the Town Code.
- Prepare a Huntington Greenways and Trails Plan.
- Implement Huntington’s Bikeways Plan.
- Integrate Huntington’s bike and pedestrian network with the Non-motorized Transportation Plan for Long Island.
- Require new development projects to include trail easements.
- Create “whole access” trails to provide outdoor recreation for all regardless of physical ability.

A.13.2 Improve public access to and use of Huntington’s waterfront.

- Implement the public access recommendations of the Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, including exploration of a potential Huntington Harbor walkway consistent with existing public uses of the waterfront (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.3).
- Identify other opportunities to establish public access to the water for recreational activities.

Policy A.14

Budget sufficient resources to maintain the high quality parks and recreation facilities.

Strategies

A.14.1 Increase staff resources as new acquisitions and programs increase Huntington's park acreage and facility use.

A.14.2 Add a Land Management position to inventory natural resources, contribute to park management plans, and manage environmental education programs (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Strategy A.10.1).

A.14.3 Increase partnerships with volunteers and citizen groups on park maintenance and improvement projects (park stewards, school students, trade unions, corporations, "adopt-a-park" programs, etc.)

A.14.4 Identify opportunities to augment current Town funding of park and recreational facilities, e.g.:

- Fair pricing of recreational activities and programs.
- Development of new revenue-producing facilities.
- Corporate/institutional grants.
- Corporate sponsorships and advertising.
- Outsourcing/concessions agreements.
- Park "friends" group(s) (established as 501(c)(3) nonprofit(s) for fundraising purposes).

4

community character

4.1 Overview

4.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

4.3 Policies and Strategies

Goals

1. **Maintain and promote Huntington's historic resources, heritage, and position as a center of the cultural arts.**
2. **Preserve and enhance Huntington's visual character and community appearance.**

4.1 Overview

Community character defines what is special and unique about Huntington. This chapter addresses the Town's built environment, including historic and cultural resources and physical appearance, as a key component of community character. Other community character components addressed by the Comprehensive Plan include parks, environmental resources, and open space (Chapter 3) and community facilities (Chapter 5).

4.1.1 Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic Resources

Some of the oldest parts of Huntington, such as Cold Spring Harbor, were settled as fishing and whaling villages in the 18th Century while most of the upland portions of the Town first served as potato and cucumber farms for European settlers. The North Shore of Long Island was a center of activity during the American Revolution and many Huntington residents played important roles in the birth of the nation. With the advent of the railroad, Long Island began a long and steady transition from a rural community based on maritime and agricultural activity to a thriving suburban community. The Town's population increased dramatically in the 20th century with the construction of the



Long Island Expressway and as population shifted out of the hamlet centers into suburban-style developments. Today, many historic resources remain to tell the story of Huntington's heritage, including Main Street in Cold Spring Harbor, Walt Whitman's birthplace, and noteworthy places and structures throughout the Town.

Designated historic resources in the Town of Huntington are shown on Figure 4.1. These resources include twelve local historic districts and eight national historic districts. In addition to these districts, the Town of Huntington lists 109 individual historic landmarks under its Historic District, Buildings and Landmark Ordinance and more are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. At this time, not all properties on the National Register are locally designated, but the Town is developing mechanisms to certify properties on the National Register for local designation. Only properties designated under the Town ordinance have regulatory protection through the requirement that a Certificate of Approval must be issued for construction, reconstruction, alteration, or demolition of historic properties.

Currently, Huntington's Historic Preservation Commission serves in an advisory role to the Town Board, Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. It has been proposed that the Commission's responsibility should be increased by giving it regulatory authority to issue permits for specific alterations to historic sites. This step would reduce some of the Town Board's work load and leave minor decisions—such as façade alterations, signs and interior modifications—with those that are more familiar with historic preservation.

Some steps have been taken to strengthen

historic preservation in Huntington. For example, the Town now has authority to prevent demolition of historic sites by neglect. By becoming a Certified Local Government under the National Historic Preservation Act, the Town would become eligible for state grants for historic preservation activities.

Heritage

Historic preservation is one component of a broader strategy to protect the heritage of the Town of Huntington. As part of the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area (LINSHA), Huntington has a long and interesting history to share with residents and visitors. The Town can honor this heritage by protecting and restoring historic buildings, districts, and landmarks; and by interpreting Huntington's history for present and future generations. Interpretation means conveying the importance of the historic, cultural, and natural resources of the Town to residents and visitors.

The LINSHA was created by state legislation



in 1998 to tell the story of the region's historic resources and to promote economic revitalization through the protection and beneficial use of these resources. A heritage area is a region with a special coherence or sense of place defined by significant natural, cultural, and historic resources that, when taken as a whole, tell the story of the region's people. Heritage areas help residents and visitors to connect with the places and cultures that have shaped the region and its inhabitants. The policies of the LINSHA Management Plan are intended to preserve the historic resources of the region, encourage sustainable development based on the area's heritage, and to foster economic revitalization and community renewal. The Management Plan also seeks to support the local economy and ecology by emphasizing the importance of Long Island Sound itself as a source of pride and sustenance. The Town of Huntington is one of a number of municipalities in the region that have passed resolutions of approval of the Management Plan.

Arts and Culture



The Town's vibrant arts and cultural life—museums, libraries, arts and cultural institutions, activities, and events—is a source of pride and shared experience for residents. Due to its many institutions, Huntington has earned the moniker of the “Cultural Capital of Long Island.” In particular, the Heckscher Museum of Art is a hub for visual arts appreciation, education, and outreach on Long Island.¹ Towns across the country are investing in the development of cultural attractions as part of their economic development strategies. Huntington already has a solid foundation of cultural offerings, which should continue to be nurtured.

4.1.2 Visual Character

The Town of Huntington contains a diverse tapestry of livable neighborhoods and scenic, walkable hamlet and unincorporated village centers. Outside of these areas, the visual character of the built environment often becomes less appealing – especially in automobile-oriented commercial corridors. There are many sites in both public and private ownership that could project a more positive image of the Town.

The Town should aim to preserve and en-



hance its aesthetic character and identity by setting high standards for design quality, protecting neighborhoods and hamlet centers from incompatible influences, and by enhancing the Town's scenic corridors, civic facilities, and landmarks.

The Public Realm

Publicly-owned properties that contribute to the visual character of the Town include gateway entrances on components of the transportation system (roadways, highway interchanges, and LIRR stations) and other highly visible locations such as heavily traveled roadway and intersection rights-of-way, parks, and public spaces. These properties comprise Huntington's “public realm.” The appearance of other pieces of public property, including elements such as landscaping, street furniture, and streetlights, can also impact the Town's visual image, as can the presence and condition of street trees. Landscaping, improved maintenance, and the inclusion of public art are just a few of the techniques available to improve the visual character of public property.

Privately Owned Properties



¹ The Heckscher Museum is in the process of completing a \$1 million renovation and historic restoration project funded by the Town, New York State, and private donors.

The design and maintenance of private property can also have a significant impact on the visual character of the Town. Much of the negative visual character in the town is the result of a lack of design standards for architecture and site design. Fronted by large parking lots and lacking design character, many commercial properties in automobile-oriented areas, including big box and strip retail centers, are among the most visible—and least attractive—components of Huntington’s built environment. The Town can use design standards and regulations to improve the visual character of private development.

Community Beautification

In order to reinforce healthy community character, it is important to maintain clean and attractive public spaces that can be enjoyed by the entire community. The level of cleanliness and attention to beautification are related to community pride. Sidewalks, parks, and roads are just a few examples of the public spaces that deserve extra attention. There are many ways to ensure that the Town of Huntington remains an attractive place for residents and visitors alike, for example: community clean-up events, tree plantings, removal of overhead wires, and enforcement of penalties for unkempt properties, illegal signage, and littering.



As another example, the Red Cross operates a Graffiti Unit that enlists individuals who are required to perform community service to paint over graffiti. The Town could create a more official linkage that makes use of this group to reduce graffiti in Huntington.

Key issues affecting community character as it relates to Huntington’s physical environment include:

- Huntington is rich in historic resources that are essential to the Town’s community character and identity. While the Town has a good program in place to preserve Huntington’s historic resources, additional steps could be taken to strengthen protection of these resources.
- The Long Island North Shore Heritage Area (LINSHA) is a potentially useful tool to promote preservation and interpretation of historic and cultural resources, economic development derived from sustainable use and enjoyment of those resources, and community pride and identity. Funding is available through the New York State Heritage Areas Program for eligible heritage preservation and development projects. However, public awareness of the heritage area and its benefits is low.

The high visual quality of historic hamlet centers and neighborhoods contributes greatly to Huntington’s community character. Conversely, much of the newer commercial development and major roadway corridors project an undistinguished visual image of the Town. Huntington’s development regulations do not provide the tools needed to protect the visual character of traditional, high quality development patterns or to improve the visual character of new development.

- Together with private development, the character of Huntington’s “public realm” defines the overall visual quality of the Town. Sustained investment is needed to support a high-quality public realm.
- Similar to Huntington’s history and heritage, the Town’s cultural and performing arts institutions and status as the “cultural center” of Long Island make both tangible and intangible contributions to its community character and identity.

The policies and strategies presented in Section 4.3 below are designed to address these issues and to achieve the following major objectives:

- Protect Huntington’s historic resources.
- Strengthen and promote Huntington’s cultural and performing arts institutions.
- Protect and promote Huntington’s natural, historic, and cultural heritage in coordination with the LINSHA Management Plan.
- Maintain and improve the visual character of Huntington’s public realm.
- “Raise the bar” on the visual character of private development.
- Continue to enhance community beautification efforts to improve visual character and enhance safety and security.

Key recommendations to achieve these objectives include:

- Pursue a variety of approaches to recognize and protect historic resources, including:
 - › Improve the Historic District, Buildings and Landmarks Ordinance.
 - › Update the 1979 historic resource inventory.

4.2 Key Issues, Objectives, & Recommendations

- › Complete town designation of eligible resources as Historic Districts or sites.
- › Investigate designation as a Certified Local Government in order to be eligible for state grants for historic preservation projects.
- › Explore use of incentives and regulations to promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.
- › Investigate the use of neighborhood conservation overlay districts to preserve the character and scale of older neighborhoods.
- Strengthen and promote the visual and performing arts.
 - › Consider a “Percent for Art” initiative for projects built with Town funds.
 - › Support efforts to provide community groups access to adequate facilities for the performing arts.
- Participate in implementing the LINSHA Management Plan, taking advantage of funding opportunities under the New York State Heritage Areas Program.
- Continue to make visual improvements to highly visible, publicly owned and maintained places within the Town and establish high standards of design quality for public improvement projects.
- Enact design standards and regulations to improve the visual quality of new development.
- Continue to increase code enforcement, sponsor community clean-ups, study the feasibility of removing overhead utilities in selected locations, and pursue other approaches to promote community beautification.

4.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy B.1

Preserve Huntington's historic resources.

Strategies

B.1.1 Identify ways to improve the Historic District, Buildings and Landmarks Ordinance.

- Review delegation of authority to issue Certificates of Approval to the Historic Preservation Commission while maintaining Town Board authority to designate historic properties.
- Develop criteria to define local significance (non-National Register properties).
- Develop criteria to evaluate the appropriateness of alterations to historic buildings or sites and construction in historic districts, including exterior alterations to non-contributing structures.
- Develop criteria to determine hardship cases.
- Develop criteria for minimum maintenance standards and demolitions by neglect.
- Increase penalties for violations.

B.1.2 Complete designation of eligible resources as Historic Districts or sites under the Historic District, Buildings and Landmarks Ordinance, giving priority to those listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

B.1.3 Update the 1979 historic resource inventory using more specific criteria to define locally significant historic properties. Link historic status to other town property records.

B.1.4 Address the full range of historic resources (cemeteries, landscapes, trees, archaeological sites, etc. in addition to individual buildings and districts) in historic preservation activities.

B.1.5 Strengthen and enhance public awareness programs on the value of Huntington's historic resources and advantages of historic designation, including:

- Disseminate information on historic resources to residents through general mailings such as tax bills.
- Undertake outreach to owners of historic properties.
- Study requiring that properties with historic designations be so identified when advertised for sale and at closing.

B.1.6 Investigate designation as a Certified Local Government under the National Historic Preservation Act, making the Town eligible for state grants for historic preservation activities such as planning, staff support, and public education.

B.1.7 Explore use of incentives and regulatory provisions to promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.

B.1.8 Investigate the use of neighborhood conservation overlay districts as a tool to preserve the character and scale of older neighborhoods.²

² Intended to protect the character of existing neighborhoods, conservation overlay districts have been adopted in many jurisdictions across the country as an alternative to more stringent historic district regulations. They typically incorporate more flexibility than historic ordinances, containing less detailed design guidelines that are tailored to address specific neighborhood concerns and features.

Policy B.2

Strengthen and promote cultural and performing arts institutions to reinforce Huntington’s identity as the “cultural capital of Long Island.”

Strategies

B.2.1 Continue to support programs at the Heckscher Museum of Art and strengthen its position as a center of visual arts appreciation, education, and outreach on Long Island.

B.2.2 Improve the sustainability of local historic and cultural non-profit organizations through grants or other means of support that leverage organizational resources.

B.2.3 Support efforts to provide community groups access to adequate facilities for the performing arts.

B.2.4 Build connections among and promote local cultural organizations (e.g., a link on the Town’s web site with “one-stop shopping” for organizations and events).

Policy B.3

Protect and promote Huntington’s natural, historic, and cultural resources as part of the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area (LINSHA) initiative.

Strategies

B.3.1 Coordinate planning initiatives to support implementation of the LINSHA Management Plan, including:

- Immediate actions identified by the Plan:
 - › Develop a plan for the Scenic and Historic Route 25A Corridor.
 - › Develop a Long Island Sound waterfront trail.
- Four primary strategy areas identified by the Plan:
 - › Preservation of cultural, historic, and natural resources.
 - › Revitalization of traditional commercial areas and maritime communities.
 - › Interpretation of North Shore heritage.
 - › Recreation.

B.3.2 Ensure that implementation actions respect local conditions, resources, and environmental and physical constraints (e.g., traffic congestion on local roadways).

B.3.3 Take advantage of funding opportunities available under the New York State Heritage Areas Program for projects that implement the Management Plan.

Policy B.4

Maintain and improve the visual character of publicly owned and maintained landscapes within Huntington.

Strategies

B.4.1 Continue to make visual improvements (landscaping, lighting, identity signage, streetscape elements, public art, etc.) to highly visible locations within the Town, including gateway entrances to Huntington (roadways, interchanges, and train stations), major corridors, landmarks, and well-utilized community facilities/spaces (e.g., parks).

- Develop a plan identifying the location of improvements, consistent design treatments, funding sources, etc.
- Initiate a phased capital program to implement the improvements.

B.4.2 Establish a high standard of design quality in new public improvement projects (buildings, landscapes, and infrastructure).

- Develop design standards for public facilities and spaces, addressing design elements such as accessibility, building treatment, landscaping, outdoor lighting, safety and security, signage, site layout, and LEED (green building) certification.
- Explore design treatments that reinforce an overall identity for Huntington while allowing for local expression (e.g., streetscape treatments appropriate to local village character).

B.4.3 Improve the health and appearance of trees on public streets.

- Implement standards for species selection, spacing/location, planting, and maintenance.
- Coordinate with the Long Island Power Authority to ensure the long-term viability and proper pruning of street trees planted under overhead utility lines.

B.4.4 Upgrade municipal streetlights and other outdoor lighting managed by the Town to reduce impacts on adjacent properties and the night sky, conserve energy, and improve aesthetic quality.

- Bring outdoor lighting into compliance with the Town's new lighting ordinance.
- Implement context-sensitive streetlight plans for neighborhoods.

B.4.5 Building on Huntington's present public art program, introduce a "percent for art" initiative on town capital improvement projects.³

B.4.6 Improve maintenance of public facilities and spaces by accounting for ongoing costs upfront, committing sufficient resources in staffing and budgeting processes, and developing an improved protocol and schedule of routine landscape maintenance.

B.4.7 Acquire strategically located properties to enhance visual quality in key locations (e.g., to accommodate gateway improvements or neighborhood enhancement projects).

Policy B.5

"Raise the bar" on the visual character of private development through improved design standards and regulations and through targeted redevelopment.

Strategies

B.5.1 Enact improved design standards for developments that exceed designated thresholds (e.g., size limits, exclusion for single-family homes). These standards should be appropriate to the local context and address design elements such as:

- Placement of buildings and parking areas in relationship to each other, public streets (e.g., build-to lines), and adjacent properties.

³ Adopted by numerous communities across the country, a percent for art program requires that a fixed percentage of the construction budget for public projects be dedicated to art that is integrated into the project and made accessible to the public.

- Building design (e.g., orientation, façade articulation, garage location, and mass/height; materials if appropriate to the local context).
- Landscaping.
- Lighting (in accordance with the Town’s new lighting ordinance).
- Access and connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit services as well as vehicular traffic.
- Signage appropriate to the scale and character of the commercial district.

B.5.2 Replace the “one size fits all” C-6 General Business Zoning District with zoning districts tailored to the characteristics of different commercial areas within the Town (see Land Use Strategy D.1.3).

- Adopt neighborhood/hamlet zoning districts with standards to maintain or enhance the character of traditional commercial areas such as Greenlawn, Huntington Village, and Huntington Station.
- Apply the C-7 Highway Business District or other zoning category to automobile-oriented corridors such as Jericho Turnpike, NYS Route 110, and Larkfield Road, with design standards to improve visual quality and address issues such as access management and pedestrian facilities.

B.5.3 Enact regulations for “big box” retail developments:

- Adopt size limits on commercial development in areas where big box retail development is inappropriate (e.g., village centers).
- Adopt big box design standards in areas where they are permitted, addressing design elements such as building mass, scale, and façade articulation; landscaping, pedestrian improvements, parking layout, and access management.⁴

B.5.4 Prepare and implement strategies to redevelop deteriorated and obsolescent areas.

Policy B.6

Continue to increase community beautification efforts, both to improve visual character and enhance safety and security.

Strategies

B.6.1 Promote neighborhood and business participation in community clean-ups (roads, parks, waterfront lands, etc.).

B.6.2 Continue to increase code enforcement and clean-up efforts to address deteriorated and unkempt private properties, graffiti, and illegal dumping and littering.

B.6.3 Study the feasibility of and potential funding sources for removing overhead utilities that detract from visual character and pose potential safety problems in selected locations, such as village centers.

⁴ Access management is defined as the “systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections to a roadway” (Transportation Research Board (TRB) 2003 Access Management Manual).

B.6.4 Promote solid waste minimization and recycling programs as part of a strategy to reduce litter.

B.6.5 Improve road drainage in locations where storm water accumulations impact visual character as well as safety (see Transportation Policy F.1.4).

B.6.6 Implement a “Green Huntington” tree management and planting program (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Strategy A.4.3).

B.6.7 Increase enforcement efforts to prohibit and remove illegal signs, including temporary signs posted on utility poles and traffic devices or in municipal rights-of-way and other public properties.

5

community facilities

5.1 Overview

5.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

5.3 Policies and Strategies

Goal

1. **Provide cost-effective community facilities and services that meet citizens' needs and contribute to Huntington's excellent quality of life.**

5.1 Overview

Community facilities include schools, libraries, fire protection, police protection, health care, and municipal facilities and services (including Human Services and the Youth Bureau). Locations of existing community facilities are shown in Figure 5.1. Citizen input into the Comprehensive Plan identified excellent schools and other community facilities and services as a key component of Huntington's high quality of life. At the same time, rising property taxes—particularly related to schools—have been identified as a major issue and threat for the future.

As a plan for action by the Town, the ability of the Comprehensive Plan to effectively engage community facility issues is affected by the fact that schools, libraries, fire protection, police protection, and health care are the responsibility of independent agencies. By law, school, libraries, and fire protection are funded by autonomous taxing jurisdictions and represented by independently elected boards. However, the Plan can provide guidance for planning to meet future needs in a cost-effective manner that maintains the high quality of service that residents have come to expect (e.g., by encouraging use of objective level of service standards to guide capital improvement programming). It can also provide direction for the Town to work cooperatively with the independent service providers to achieve the community facilities goal.



5.1.1 Independent Community Facility and Service Providers

Schools

The Town of Huntington is served by eight different school districts. Each school district is a separate taxing jurisdiction governed by an independently elected school board of trustees. The quality of education in Huntington schools is excellent, and is a significant contributing factor to the Town's high quality of life. While citizens are proud of their schools and the quality of education they provide, they are also concerned about the effects of rising school costs, property taxes, and school enrollment. Specific concerns that have been cited include:

- When population growth leveled off in the 1990s, school enrollments stabilized and in some cases decreased. Some school districts in Huntington sold excess buildings and land. However, increased enrollment in recent years has resulted in schools that are at or over capacity. Bond issues have been proposed on a case-by-case basis to address this situation, but long-term solutions are difficult because of:
 - › A lack of reliable information on enrollment trends that can be used to proactively plan for future needs.
 - › High land values and lack of vacant land available for new school facilities.
 - › Citizen frustration with a revolving cycle of school property tax increases.
- Unfunded and under-funded federal and state educational mandates and increasing health care costs, among other factors, cause the costs of operating schools to escalate even when enrollment remains relatively stable.

- Higher-density and/or affordable housing development may contribute to enrollment increases and some school districts may be more directly impacted than others.
- The use of schools by residents as centers of community activity is an important service but can contribute to cost burdens.
- There are disparities among school districts in the value of the non-residential tax base and its mitigating effect on residential property taxes.

Accurate information regarding enrollment and housing trends and associated fiscal impacts is needed to properly assess and address these concerns. For example, Suffolk County projections indicate that school enrollments will level off as the “baby boom echo” generation moves through and out of the schools, but some school districts report unanticipated increases from one year to the next. In addition, most new higher-density housing in Huntington is designed for senior citizens or small households, housing types that do not usually attract residents with school age children. However, it has been asserted that some of this new development is generating more school age children than initially projected.

It is important to note that while the array of concerns relating to increased school costs can be discussed at the local or regional level, issues such as federal and state mandates and the impact of high health care costs can only be dealt with by the State Legislature in Albany and the Congress in Washington, D.C.

Libraries

There are eight public library districts in the Town of Huntington. Boundaries of library districts and school districts coincide, but library districts are independent taxing jurisdictions and are governed by independently elected boards of trustees. In general, Huntington voters approve library budgets and willingly support operational and capital improvements for library services. In addition, all eight public library districts in the Town belong to the Suffolk County Cooperative Library System, which provides for economies of scale in lending, purchasing, and other library management functions.

Most of Huntington's public library districts are in the process or have recently completed important expansion/improvement projects. For example, the Huntington Station branch expanded from 4,000 to 7,000 square feet and there is pressure to expand again, in particular to address increasing demand for IT (Information Technology) services. Libraries are expanding not just in size, but also in the scope of services they provide. In general, they are assuming greater roles as education centers due to societal demands and technological trends such as the widespread use of the Internet. Teaching—particularly computer training—is now a major focus for libraries and citizens expect state-of-the-art services



and facilities. Additionally, libraries are playing more important roles as community centers, providing both formal and informal meeting spaces for citizen and organizations.

Fire and Emergency Services

There are 12 different fire districts in the Town of Huntington, all of which are staffed by volunteers. Because fire protection services are provided by volunteers, maintaining sufficient personnel levels is very important and there is an ongoing need to recruit new members. Cost-of-living factors such as the high price of housing are impacting recruitment and retention of firefighters and EMS volunteers. Fire district representatives have suggested that the Town consider additional incentives and training programs to encourage greater volunteer participation.

Training and recertification of firefighters and emergency service employees is a second major concern identified by the fire districts. Presently, EMS and firefighters use a county training facility, which is 45 minutes away and often busy. In order to train more than four times per year, it would be desirable to develop a training facility in the Town. However, lack of available land and high property values make development of such a facility unlikely at this time.



Police Protection

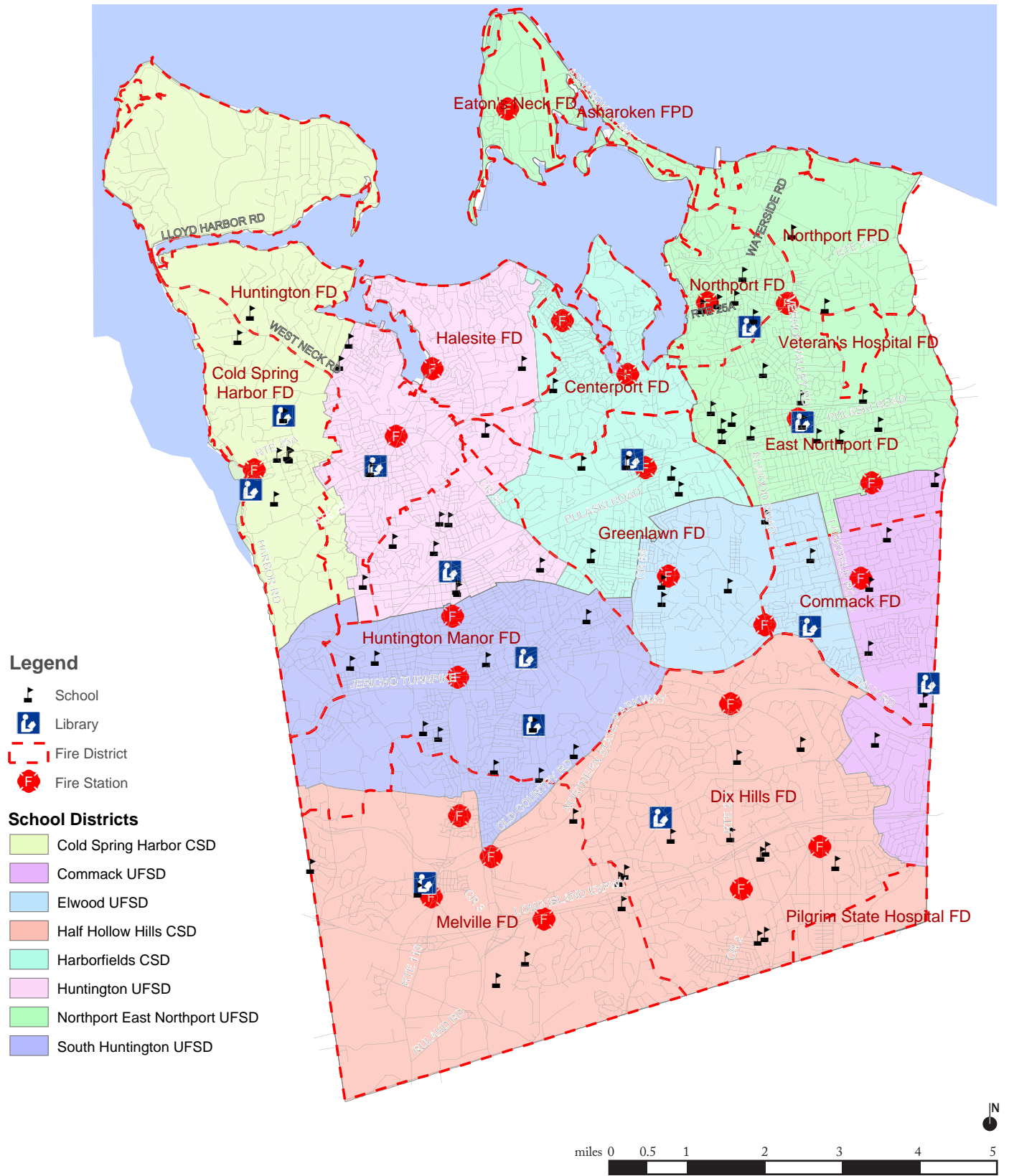
Police protection for the Town of Huntington and its citizens has been provided by the 2nd Precinct of the Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) since 1960. The SCPD headquarters is located in Yaphank and the 2nd Precinct is located at 1071 Park Avenue in Huntington. Countywide, the department has approximately 2,500 sworn officers, making it one of the largest police departments in the country. The department reports a long-term downward trend in the crime rate in the Town of Huntington and western Suffolk County in general, where the most common police-related activity includes youth crime, gang activity, drug and alcohol abuse, and quality of life misdemeanors like loitering and graffiti.

Health Care

Health care services in the Town are provided by private hospitals, clinics, and through public programs administered by Suffolk County.

Huntington Hospital is the cornerstone of local health care delivery. A 408-bed, non-profit, community health care facility, the Hospital has been a member of the North Shore-Long Island Jewish (NS-LIJ) Health System since 1994. With a \$180 million budget and staff of 1,500 doctors, nurses, employees and volunteers, Huntington Hospital admits over 12,000 patients per year. In addition to serving the health care needs of the general population, the Hospital is a significant engine driving the local economy and tax base. In cooperation with the Town, it operates the Dolan Family Health Center in Greenlawn, a walk-in community health facility. The federal government operates a regional Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Figure 5.1 Community Facilities



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

on a 300-acre campus in Northport. The VA hospital offers a full range of in-patient, out-patient and long-term care medical services to qualified retirees and veterans of America's armed forces living in the bi-county region.

Huntington Hospital is located on a constrained site of approximately 13 acres in a residential neighborhood just east of the Huntington unincorporated village center. There is little opportunity for expansion. While the NS-LIJ system has no plans to further broaden the scope of medical services, on-site parking and access to existing emergency, acute care, and in-patient and out-patient medical services have been pressing concerns for some time. Service demands are likely to increase due to an aging Town population with increasing health care needs related to ambulatory impairment, disability, and other conditions. The current trend of doctors relocating lucrative parts of their practice outside of the hospital is a possible mitigating factor, but is resulting in outpatient health care "clusters" in nearby areas where ready access to hospital emergency and acute care is available.

5.1.2 Municipal Facilities and Services

Transportation

In recognition of the importance of transportation management/congestion mitigation to modern suburban residents, a key concern identified during the Community Visioning process, the Huntington Town Board recently created the Huntington Department of Transportation. The responsibilities of this department include traffic planning, traffic signalization, street lighting, and operation/maintenance of the 22-vehicle HART bus fleet, which serves 250,000 riders annually.

General Services

Huntington's Department of General Services is responsible for administering vital functions for the Town, including space utilization and maintenance services for all Town-owned parks, buildings, and facilities. As the Town matures, its space utilization needs will change. In addition, it is current town policy that facilities should be made more efficient in terms of energy usage and incorporation of "green building" standards. Preparation of a Municipal Facilities Plan would help the Department of General Services to proactively plan for and coordinate facility development to meet current and projected needs in the most cost-effective manner. As part of a Sustainable Huntington initiative, such a plan should pay particular attention to use of green building and maintenance protocols.

Human Services

Many services that address the day-to-day needs of individuals and families residing in Huntington are provided by the Town's Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS's mission is to administer, manage, and coordinate these programs and services. The department is composed of several divisions, including: Human Services, Minority Affairs, and Special Projects. The Human Services division administers programs for senior citizens, women, veterans, and the handicapped. The Minority Affairs division serves as a liaison to Huntington's minority communities, sharing information about town programs, services, and business/employment opportunities. The Special Projects division functions as an ombudsman for residents and the programs available to them from the federal, state, county, and town levels of government.

The Department of Human Services also oversees the Human Services Institute, a private non-profit corporation that coordinates specialized services with local organizations and community partners. The Department provides a strong support base for residents in need, a role likely to increase as the resident population ages and becomes more diverse.

Youth Bureau

A town department, the Huntington Youth Bureau (HYB) promotes the growth, development, and wellbeing of youth in Huntington through the development and implementation of programs and services that respond to the needs of young people and their families. HYB contracts with schools and local community-based agencies to provide a host of programs and services, as well as special projects through its Development Research Institute. Programs include:

- Drug and Alcohol Project (treatment and prevention services).
- Youth Court (trains youth to act as lawyers, judges, and jurors in a special court of their peers).
- Project EXCEL (helps youth excel through the arts, tutoring, college preparation, and job help and training).
- Sanctuary (protects runaways and youth with no place to stay).
- Street Outreach (a component of the runaway and homeless youth program that identifies kids who can benefit from HYB programs and refers them accordingly).

Similar to many suburban communities, Huntington's youth are in need of program options outside of school and organized

5.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

sports. HYB strives to expand the range of positive, shared activities available to youth to help reduce problems such as drug and alcohol abuse and gang involvement. Improved community outreach for HYB contract programs and special projects, increased youth programming, and facilities accessible to more youth throughout Huntington would support these efforts. Continued innovation in addressing the diversity of Huntington's youth population, including partnering with other town departments to work with physically and mentally challenged youth, should be an integral component.

As described before, each type of community facility or service has unique issues and needs related to its mission. The various independent providers—and the Town—share in common the goal of maintaining the excellent levels of service that residents expect while addressing trends such as increasing costs, a changing population, and emerging resident needs and expectations. The Town can help meet this challenge by providing a collaborative framework in which common concerns can be addressed in a coordinated manner based on the best available information describing present conditions and future trends. Specific objectives include:

- Systematic, coordinated planning to meet future needs for community facilities and services based on accurate demographic information, level of service standards, and other objective inputs.
- Cooperation among different service providers and between service providers and the Town.
- Initiatives and programs that support service providers in addressing issues and meeting needs (e.g., by managing growth to address community facility and service costs generated by new development).

Key recommendations include:

- Continue to coordinate planning for school needs through collaborative efforts involving the Town and local school districts.
- Support other service providers in planning for future community facility needs and encourage approaches such as sharing of resources and joint-use facilities.
- Pursue a variety of approaches to addressing community facility and service costs, ranging

from strengthening the nonresidential tax base to investigating regulatory approaches such as an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

- Prepare and implement a long-range Municipal Facilities Master Plan to optimize the use and operation of town facilities, including “green building” protocols as part of a Sustainable Huntington initiative.
- Identify other ways to support community facilities and services provided by the Town and independent providers, for example:
 - › Improve transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access for residents and accessibility for persons with disabilities.
 - › Strengthen town programs that combat teenage crime and gang involvement (e.g., Youth Bureau programs).

5.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy C.1

Take a proactive role in assisting local service providers (school districts, library districts, fire districts, SCPD, Huntington Hospital) in implementing a collaborative planning framework to identify and prioritize community facility and service needs based on objective data.

Strategies

C.1.1 Work with the eight school districts to continue to promote high quality public education.

- Continue collaborative efforts involving the Town and local school districts.
- Participate in county/regional forums that address issues of mutual importance to school districts and local municipalities.
- Increase capacity to project population and demographic changes based on subdivision and building permit activity. Share this information with the school districts, Western Suffolk Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES¹) and other community facility providers for use in assessing operational and capital needs.
- Assist in development of long-range plans that address enrollment projections.
- Continue to address quality child care planning needs.
- Continue to address issues of drugs, alcohol abuse, and Internet safety.
- Encourage public retention of existing school buildings/real property to facilitate ability to serve future educational/public needs.

C.1.2 Encourage other service providers to implement community facility planning.

- Make the latest demographic information available to assist in planning efforts.
- Encourage service providers to develop and apply level of service standards (e.g., emergency response time for fire protection) in conjunction with demographic trends to identify needs for new, expanded, or consolidated facilities.
- Address identified needs through capital improvement programming.

C.1.3 Evaluate the facility needs of the Town of Huntington's community service providers as part of a Municipal Facilities Master Plan (see Community Facilities Policy C.6).

C.1.4 As part of Community Facilities Strategy C.1.3, explore the expansion of programs/facilities available for youth activities and events.

C.1.5 Work with Huntington Hospital to ensure continued compatibility of the Hospital's mission with the needs of its surrounding residential neighborhood.

C.1.6 Encourage service providers to establish and apply indicators to measure success in providing high quality community facilities and services.

- Consider integrating measures of success for community facilities into a broader set of community indicators as part of a "Sustainable Huntington" initiative.

¹ The Western Suffolk BOCES is responsible for projecting changes in enrollment for its member school districts.

Policy C.2

Address the impacts of new residential developments on schools and other community facilities.

Strategies

C.2.1 Require projections of school-age children generated by developments that exceed a designated size threshold.

C.2.2 As recommended by the Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission and set forth in Suffolk County’s proposed “Downstate Suburban Workforce Housing for Economic Sustainability Act,” support state legislation that would provide a formula for supplemental financial aid for school districts with workforce housing development sites while ensuring that other state school aid programs are maintained at full funding.

C.2.3 Identify opportunities to meet community facility needs through the land development process (e.g., monetary contributions to meet facility needs or dedication of land for school sites in exchange for density increases or lot size reductions).

C.2.4 Investigate the use of an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance to ensure that sufficient facilities and services are in place concurrent with new development.²

Policy C.3

Work with service providers to pursue a variety of approaches to address community facility and service costs.

Strategies

C.3.1 Promote compatible economic development projects that strengthen the commercial tax base. (This is particularly important in school districts with proportionally higher dependence on residential property assessments.)

C.3.2 Pursue cost efficiencies in the provision of public facilities and services through the sharing of resources and identification of opportunities to consolidate services.

C.3.3 Where feasible, provide shared rather than single-use facilities to promote cost efficiencies and more comprehensive services for citizens.

C.3.4 Promote partnerships among service providers and between providers and private organizations, institutions, and businesses to help meet community facility and service needs (e.g., playing fields provided by the private sector to relieve the burden on school facilities).

Policy C.4

Strengthen the role of community facilities as activity centers for surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategies

C.4.1 Work with the schools, libraries, and other providers to increase public good will for and utilization of facilities where capacity permits room for compatible community activities.

C.4.2 Where underutilization is identified, promote compatible community-oriented services provided by private and/or public agencies (e.g., day care).

¹ An adequate public facilities ordinance requires specific levels of service or service capacity, such as roads, schools, public water, and public sewer, as a condition for approving new development. The first such ordinance was adopted by Ramapo, NY in 1972. In response to rapid growth and increasingly inadequate public facilities and services, the town developed a comprehensive plan and capital improvement program that provided for the location and sequence of capital improvements over an 18-year period. Based on the comprehensive plan and capital improvement program, the town enacted regulations requiring applicants to demonstrate the availability of “essential facilities and services,” including adequate roads, public parks, and public sewer facilities, in order to obtain subdivision approval. Subdivision approvals were determined according to a point system, with each specified capital improvement being worth one point. Developers could “purchase” points to expedite permit approval by agreeing to supply the necessary improvements. Ramapo’s ordinance was legally challenged but was upheld by the New York Court of Appeals and, eventually, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Golden v. Planning Board of Ramapo*. (Kelly L. Munkwitz, Does the SEQRA authorize mitigation fees (New York State Environmental Quality Review Act), Albany Law Review, 12/22/1997)

C.4.3 Integrate existing and new facilities into centers of community activity (e.g., village centers and other destinations with multiple community-serving uses) maximizing cost/benefit advantages.

C.4.4 Identify opportunities to strategically locate selected facilities where they can serve local needs and strengthen community and neighborhood ties (e.g., the new cultural center and proposed youth center in Huntington Station).

Policy C.5

Improve the accessibility of community facilities to residents.

Strategies

C.5.1 Provide multiple modes of access to community facilities, including transit and pedestrian/bicycle linkages.

C.5.2 Improve transportation options for persons who find it difficult to travel to community facilities (e.g., youths, the elderly, and special needs population).

C.5.3 Ensure that community facilities are readily accessible to persons with disabilities.

C.5.4 In coordination with the fire districts and emergency service providers, monitor for potential effects on emergency response time (e.g., traffic congestion).

Policy C.6

Develop a long-range Municipal Facilities Master Plan to optimize the use and operation of the Town of Huntington's buildings, structures and facilities.

Strategies

C.6.1 Evaluate the facility/space needs of and optimal relationships and functions between different town departments for the purpose of eliminating deficiencies, improving economies of scale, and reducing costs.

C.6.2 Address identified needs through a phased capital program.

C.6.3 Enhance and upgrade municipal facilities through modernization, energy efficiency improvements, and acceleration of deferred maintenance, including review of budgeting, accounting, staffing and scheduling of routine maintenance and capital improvements as part of the upgrade process.

C.6.4 Use green building techniques in the design and construction of municipal facilities as part of a "Sustainable Huntington" initiative.

Policy C.7

Pursue a comprehensive approach to public safety, crime, and youth delinquency prevention.

Strategies

C.7.1 Maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Suffolk County Police Department to monitor trends, address problem areas, and involve citizen groups in youth crime and gang prevention efforts.

C.7.2 Identify and strengthen town activities and programs that limit gang influence and prevent related crime, for example:

- Activities and programs for youths (including consideration of developing additional youth activity facilities per Community Facilities Strategy C.1.4).
- Application of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design techniques in the design of public facilities, landscapes, and streetscapes and in design standards for private developments.³
- Involving residents in neighborhood safety and crime prevention efforts.
- Encouraging participation in the park stewardship and similar stakeholder programs.

C.7.3 Maintain a state of readiness to respond to natural and man-made disasters, including an Emergency Preparedness Plan and All Hazards Plan defining actions to be taken to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from potentially life-threatening emergencies.

³ Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPED) is based on the premise that the design of the physical environment can positively influence human behavior to create a climate of safety and reduce crime. Three key strategies of CPED include territoriality (design to express ownership of a place), natural surveillance (design to facilitate the ability to observe activities in the space), and access control (locating access points to direct traffic in ways that discourage crime).

6

land use

6.1 Overview

6.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

6.3 Policies and Strategies

6.4 Generalized Future Land Use Map

Goal

- 1. Manage development and redevelopment to protect valued land use patterns and to maintain or improve the character of areas experiencing pressures for change.**

6.1 Overview

Comprising approximately 83 square miles of land area, the Town of Huntington occupies a large portion of north-central Long Island. Some of the oldest parts of Huntington, such as Cold Spring Harbor, were settled as fishing and whaling villages in the 18th Century while most of the upland portions of the Town first served as potato and cucumber farms for European settlers. In the 19th century, the town's population began to concentrate in villages at road intersections and, eventually, near the stations of the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). The Town of Huntington increased dramatically in population in the 20th century when the accessibility provided by the Long Island Expressway and LIRR, decent and affordable housing stock, and excellent community facilities and services helped to make Huntington a prosperous suburb and center of commerce on Long Island.

Today, the Town of Huntington is almost entirely built out with large portions of its land area dedicated to single-family detached housing. Huntington Village and other historic, mixed-use hamlet centers play an important role in community life, but most employment and retail space in the Town is located in the Melville Employment Center and along major commercial corridors. Melville provides jobs for thousands of Long Islanders. Jericho Turnpike and NYS Route 110 are major retail corridors while a number of minor commercial corridors serve residents at a more neighborhood scale.

6.1.1 Existing Land Use

Existing land use in the Town of Huntington is shown on Figure 6.1. Table 6.1 shows the percentage and acreage breakdown of existing land uses in the Town of Huntington

as of 2007. The various categories shown on the map and in the table are described below. Additional information on existing land use in selected geographic focal areas within the Town is presented in Chapter 10.

Agricultural

There is very little land in the Town of Huntington that is still dedicated to agricultural uses. Once a prime agricultural area on Long Island known for its potato and pickle production, the Town is now almost entirely developed with other uses. Several agricultural areas still remain near the Melville Employment Center and along Jericho Turnpike and the western portion of Pulaski Road.

Commercial

Commercial land uses are found throughout the Town of Huntington and range from very small, local retail services to regional shopping malls. The greatest concentrations of commercial land uses are found along the major transportation corridors in the Town, including Route 110, Jericho Turnpike, Larkfield Road, and Route 25A. Most of these areas are zoned C-6 General Business. Jericho Turnpike is the most extensively developed with strip malls and big box retailers, including notable concentrations at the intersections with



Larkfield Road and Route 110. This corridor serves customers from throughout Huntington as well as from neighboring municipalities. The Walt Whitman Mall is located just south of Jericho Turnpike along Route 110. This regional retail center draws customers from Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Smaller commercial corridors and nodes located throughout the Town serve the needs of local residents. Examples include Route 25A and the northern portion of Larkfield Road. Small-scale, local retail areas are characterized by one to three-story buildings with a variety of uses and pedestrian access from adjacent neighborhoods. Main Street in Cold Spring Harbor is a unique commercial corridor with an emphasis on antiques and other goods that cater to visitors.

Table 6.1 Existing Land Use

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Agriculture	498	0.9
Commercial	1,452	2.7
Industrial	665	1.2
Institutional	3,078	5.8
Office	768	1.4
Open Space and Recreation	7,754	14.6
Residential	33,829	63.8
Utilities and Infrastructure	3,174	6.0
Total	52,995	100.0

Source: Suffolk County Real Property Tax Service Agency

Other commercial land uses occur in traditional nodes and centers such as Huntington Village, East Northport, and Greenlawn. Huntington Village is the largest traditional commercial area in the Town of Huntington, covering several blocks with a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses. The village has undergone a transformation in recent years from a hub of local services to more of a regional dining and shopping destination. Northport and Greenlawn are smaller commercial centers near Long Island Railroad stations. These traditional centers cater mostly to local residents with restaurants, post offices and other services.

Other small pockets of commercial uses are located throughout the Town. Typical uses include restaurants, plant nurseries, medical offices, and building materials suppliers.

Industrial

There are a number of different types of industrial uses in the Town of Huntington, including warehousing, light manufacturing, resource extraction, and research and development. The Melville area contains the most significant concentration of industrial land uses in the Town of Huntington. Typical uses include light manufacturing and warehousing/distribution and are located away from



major roads (Route 110 and Pinelawn Road). Other industrial uses in Melville include the Pineridge sand mine and light industrial uses along Spagnoli Road.

Research and development firms help drive the local economy in the Town of Huntington. In particular, research performed at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory has spurred the creation of a number of biotechnology firms and Route 110 is now marketed as a biotech corridor. High-tech firms in other industries have also located in the Melville Employment Center.

Much of the Town's historic industrial areas are located along the LIRR right-of-way. These users include building materials storage, warehousing, and light manufacturing, as well as research and development users such as BAE Systems. Several industrial tenants still use LIRR rail sidings for freight deliveries, so this is a critical location for such operations.

Institutional

Schools constitute the most prevalent institutional land use in the Town. The Town has eight public school districts with schools distributed evenly throughout the Town, often on large parcels in residential neighborhoods. Most schools include some open space and

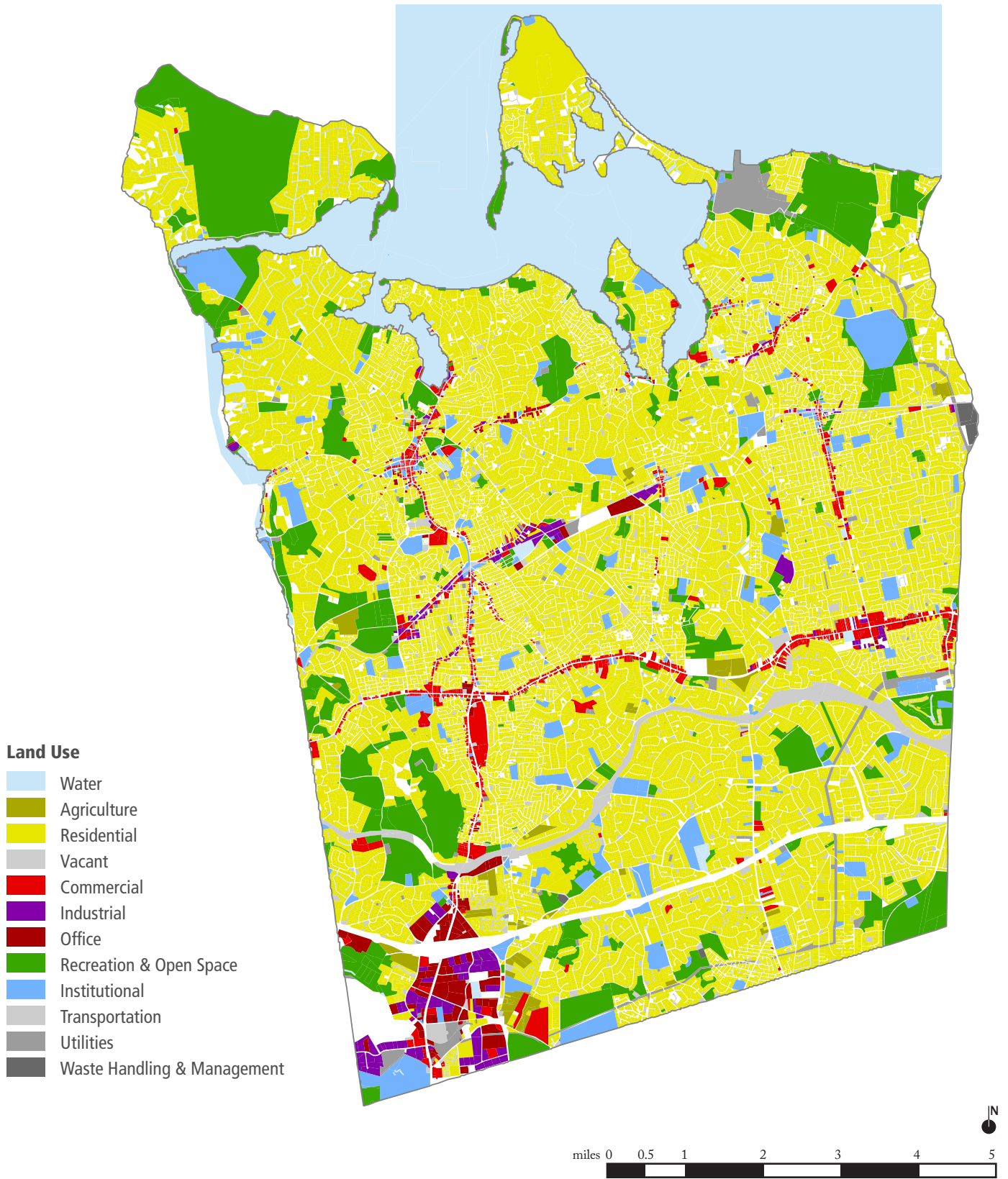


recreation areas, while high schools include large arrays of athletic fields and even nature centers. The State University of New York College of Technology at Farmingdale has a portion of its campus in the Town of Huntington as well.

A large amount of land in the Town of Huntington is occupied by other community-oriented uses, including hospitals, cemeteries, and recreation centers. The two largest hospitals in the Town are Huntington Hospital near Huntington Village and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Northport. Significant cemeteries include Huntington Rural Cemetery near Huntington Village and the northern portion of Long Island National Cemetery located just east of the Melville Employment Center. Community recreation centers exist throughout the Town, generally near preserved lands and schools.



Figure 6.1 Existing Land Use



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State



Office

Office uses occur throughout the Town of Huntington in a variety of development types, ranging from converted homes to international corporate headquarters. One of the most significant concentrations of office space on Long Island, the Melville Employment Center is characterized by large office buildings with expansive parking lots. Smaller office buildings are scattered along corridors throughout the Town, such as Route 25A. Additional office space is located in the mixed-use hamlet centers and particularly in Huntington Village. Office uses in this area have been increasing as lawyers, doctors, and other service providers locate near Town Hall and Huntington Hospital in an attractive retail and entertainment center. Office uses often occupy upper-floor spaces in the center of the village or converted residential units in the fringes of the district.

Open Space and Recreation

Open spaces are located throughout Huntington, with the largest concentrations found near the western boundary of the Town. Taking advantage of Huntington's unique glacial geography, West Hills Park is a large preserve surrounding the highest point on Long Island. The Pineridge property just south of the Long Island Expressway and west of the



Melville Employment Center is a large tract of wooded land currently used for public recreation. A portion of the Sagtikos Regional Development Zone is located in the southeast corner of the Town of Huntington and is currently covered by pitch pine-scrub oak habitat. This site could be impacted by a proposed truck and rail intermodal trans-loading facility in neighboring Smithtown; however, legislation is pending that would allow a 118-acre addition to the Edgewood Oak Brush Plains Preserve instead. In addition to parks, recreational lands include public and private golf courses. Other recreational uses in the Town include public beaches and boat clubs.

Residential

The most prevalent land use in the Town of Huntington is residential. The residential uses take many forms, ranging from single-family neighborhoods to condominium complexes and small apartment buildings. A small number of residential units can be found above retail and office uses in the older mixed-use centers of the town. Traditional residential neighborhoods with grid street patterns, small front yards, and connected sidewalks predominate in and around the unincorporated village and hamlet centers. Apartment and condominium complexes are rare, but can be found



primarily in the Huntington Station area and recently developed areas such as the Melville Employment Center. The remainder – and largest portion – of the residential land uses take the form of post-WWII, suburban housing served by quiet curvilinear streets. These neighborhoods typically occupy the areas between traditional, mixed-use areas, commercial corridors, and employment centers.

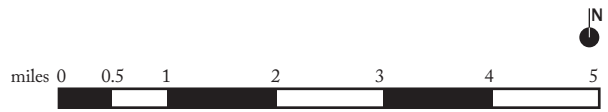
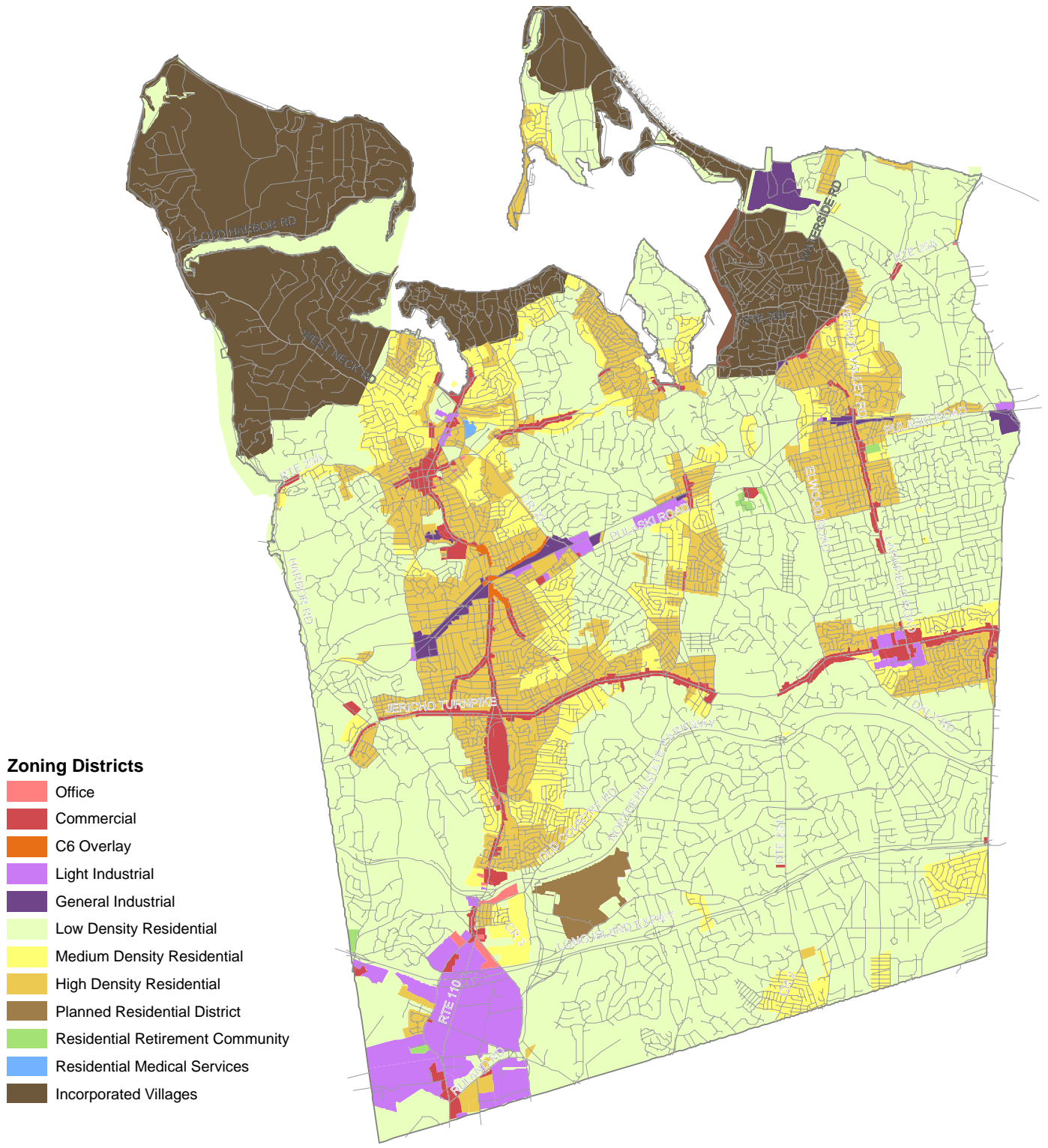
Utilities and Infrastructure

Utilities and infrastructure include overhead utility corridors, power generation and waste handling facilities, and roads. A primary utility corridor in the Town of Huntington runs across the southern and eastern portions of the Town connecting a substation in Melville to one in Smithtown. Power generating facilities are located in two areas of the Town, including one on the Long Island Sound near Asharoken Avenue and another on the border with Smithtown at Pulaski Road.

Vacant Land

There is little vacant land remaining in the Town of Huntington. Much of what is classified as vacant is actually awaiting conversion to another use, for example when property owners hold previously developed properties while waiting for zoning approval or for

Figure 6.2 Generalized Existing Zoning



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

more favorable market conditions. The largest amount of vacant land is located in the Melville area. Concentrations of vacant land also occur in areas zoned for industrial uses along the LIRR right-of-way. Several vacant parcels along Jericho Turnpike contain unoccupied, obsolescent retail structures. Other vacant properties are scattered throughout the Town.

6.1.2 Existing Zoning

Generalized existing zoning designations in the Town of Huntington are shown in Figure 6.2. The pattern of existing zoning largely reflects the existing pattern of residential, commercial, office, and industrial uses, except that a significant portion of the land zoned industrial in Melville has been developed for office uses.

The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations are the Town's primary instruments for controlling the location, intensity, and character of new development in Huntington. Issues with the existing regulations include:

- The regulations lack contemporary tools commonly used by jurisdictions elsewhere in the country to achieve community goals, for example:
 - › Provisions for alternative development forms (e.g., conservation development, mixed use districts, and neotraditional development).
 - › Design standards to improve development character.
 - › Comprehensive natural resource protection standards.

- The predominant commercial zoning district, C-6 General Business does not address the historic character of Huntington's traditional centers such as Huntington Village, applying the same generic standards as are applied to commercial corridors such as Jericho Turnpike.
- The Zoning Ordinance contains numerous zoning districts, including 11 residential districts, 11 commercial districts, and special use districts that apply to specific properties. This contributes to its complexity and difficulty of use.
- The high level of Zoning Board of Appeals activity reflects the number of conditional/special use permits authorized by the Zoning Ordinance, as well as the pressure to maximize the use of more marginal properties through variances as the Town approaches build out. Revising the ordinance to provide greater clarity and predictability through more explicit standards and review procedures would help to address this issue.

6.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

Land uses in the Town of Huntington will continue to change and evolve over time. Key issues that need to be addressed in managing this change include:

- The fact that the Town of Huntington is mostly built out and has very little remaining vacant land raises several key issues for the future:
 - › Development pressures on the remaining available vacant land must be balanced with the need for parks and open space in a real estate market driven by high land values.
 - › There will be increasing demand for redevelopment and intensification of existing land uses.
 - › Development and redevelopment must be managed to protect the existing desirable land use patterns—single-family neighborhoods and hamlet centers—that define Huntington's quality of life.
- The greatest potential for change is in areas with commercial and mixed uses that tend to be affected by changing consumer preferences and market changes. These **geographic focal areas** include unincorporated village and hamlet centers, commercial corridors, and the Melville Employment Center. Issues in the geographic focal areas are described in greater detail in Chapter 10.
- As described above in Section 6.1.2, the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations do not provide the tools needed to manage development to achieve the direction set by the Comprehensive Plan.
- Land use changes can have significant effects on traffic, infrastructure, and community facility needs. In addition, infrastructure

issues such as the limited extent of sewer service areas can significantly affect the potential for development or redevelopment. These interrelationships must be addressed in managing growth and change.

- Industrial and heavy commercial uses necessary to the local economy are under pressure because of the lack of industrially-zoned land and high property values.
- Large-scale developments in adjacent municipalities—notably those occurring in the Sagtikos Regional Development Zone in Islip, Babylon, and Smithtown—will generate increased traffic and could affect the viability of retail uses in Huntington.

The land use policies and strategies are designed to address these issues. Because Huntington is mostly built out, they do not propose to significantly change the existing land use pattern. Instead, they are intended to achieve several major objectives:

- Maintain and strengthen viable land uses and land use patterns, including single-family neighborhoods and traditional hamlet centers.
- Improve the economic viability, visual quality, and pedestrian character of automobile-oriented commercial corridors and centers.
- Target marginal and obsolescent land uses that detract from the Town's character for reinvestment and redevelopment with new uses that support quality of life and economic vitality.
- Reinforce the Melville Employment Center's position as an employment hub while improving development character and addressing impacts on infrastructure and community facilities.

- Minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses, particularly older industrial areas and retail corridors next to residential neighborhoods.
- Cooperate with adjacent municipalities to manage growth and the impacts of developments of regional significance.

The primary tools available to manage land use change to achieve these objectives are:

1. **Land use plans and policies** to guide for decision-makers. While the Comprehensive Plan establishes the overall framework, additional planning initiatives at both the smaller (area) scale and the larger (regional) scale can reinforce and articulate in more detail the basic policies and strategies established in this plan.
2. **Zoning and subdivision/site plan regulations** that incorporate the direction set by the land use policies.
3. **Public investments** for purposes such as land preservation or infrastructure improvements to promote desired types of development consistent with the land use policies.

The strategies presented in Section 6.2 below focus on these three basic tools. Key recommendations include:

1. Many of the individual strategies involve modernizing and updating the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations. Updating these regulations should be undertaken as a coordinated implementation task that is phased over several years. Priority changes—such as revising the C-6 General Business Zoning District—should be undertaken first.

2. An area plan should be prepared for the Melville Employment Center to address land use, circulation, and infrastructure issues in an integrated, more detailed manner within the overall framework established by the Comprehensive Plan. This plan will define recommended zoning changes, infrastructure improvements, and physical investments to improve Melville's character. Section 10.3.1 of the Geographic Focal Areas chapter describes in more detail what should be included in this plan.
3. The strategies include recommendations for public investments to promote the desired land use patterns, such as development of community-serving uses in Huntington Station, possible development of public parking where needed in older commercial areas, and façade improvement programs. Additional recommendations for physical improvements to geographic focal areas are provided in Chapter 10.0. These recommendations should be evaluated and prioritized for inclusion in a program of capital improvements to be carried out over a period of years based on available funding.

6.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy D.1

Established Land Uses: Protect the stability of established, high quality land use patterns, including residential neighborhoods and unincorporated hamlet centers.

Strategies

D.1.1 Enact regulations and standards to limit intensification and its impacts on the character of existing neighborhoods:

- Limit tear-downs/reconstruction of larger homes (e.g., building/impervious coverage requirements).
- Limit subdivision of large properties into smaller lots .
- Limit the assemblage of smaller properties into large lots within hamlet centers to reduce the impact of big box retailers and large office buildings.

D.1.2 Enact regulations and standards to protect neighborhoods and other established uses from higher intensity uses, e.g.:

- Conversion of existing single-family homes to non-residential uses.
- Commercial depth extensions into residential areas.
- Buffer requirements/performance standards for commercial and other incompatible uses adjacent to residential areas.
- Non-residential uses permitted in residential zoning districts (churches, institutions).

D.1.3 Enact regulations and standards to protect unincorporated hamlet centers (see Section 10.2 of the Geographic Focal Areas chapter for more detail):

- Replace the “one size fits all” C-6 General Business Zoning District with districts tailored to the characteristics of village centers.
- Apply zoning to established hamlet centers (Cold Spring Harbor, East Northport, Greenlawn, and Huntington Village) in a manner that respects local character and scale.
- Explore application of hamlet center zoning to other locations that are appropriate to redevelop as village centers.
- Protect roadway corridors leading into hamlet centers from inappropriate incursions by automobile-oriented uses and other development incompatible with village character (e.g., demolition of older houses that have been converted to professional offices).

Policy D.2

Major Commercial Corridors and Centers: Manage change to achieve Comprehensive Plan goals and policies in major commercial corridors and centers that will

Strategies

D.2.1 Enact regulations and standards to improve development patterns, visual character, traffic circulation (i.e., access management), and the pedestrian environment in major commercial centers and corridors.

D.2.2 Prepare and implement an integrated land use, circulation, and infrastructure plan for the Melville Employment Center.

experience obsolescence and pressures for redevelopment, including the Melville Employment Center, Jericho Turnpike, and Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike (see Section 10.3 of the Geographic Focal Areas chapter for more detail).

D.2.3 Focus more intense commercial/mixed-use development in appropriately located “nodes” along Jericho Turnpike, with less intense development between the nodes.

D.2.4 Establish guidelines for the expansion of the Walt Whitman Mall to minimize negative impacts, improve its visual, and improve its role as a center of community activity.

D.2.5 Enact design guidelines and a façade improvement/signage replacement program to improve the character of smaller commercial uses along Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike.

Policy D.3

Minor Commercial Corridors: Improve the economic viability of smaller-scale commercial corridors while improving visual quality, including pedestrian-oriented scale and character (see also Section 10.3.4 of the Geographic Focal Areas chapter).

Strategies

D.3.1 Promote the revitalization of New York Avenue and other commercial corridors (Broadway, Pulaski Road) in Huntington Station through public actions designed to stimulate private investment in community-serving uses.

D.3.2 Prepare and implement a Route 25A Corridor Improvement Plan to achieve the following:

- Maintain and enhance the scale and character of existing commercial uses.
- Prevent new automobile-oriented, strip commercial development.
- Address traffic safety and access management.
- Enhance visual appearance of historic roadway.

D.3.3 Enhance the economic vitality of smaller-scale commercial corridors through the selective introduction of small-scale/professional office, residential, and mixed uses.

D.3.4 Enact design standards to prevent the proliferation of automobile-oriented uses and improve visual character as redevelopment occurs over time.

D.3.5 Promote more efficient site utilization of small properties by expanding the availability of shared/public parking.

D.3.6 Implement targeted façade improvement/signage replacement programs to improve visual character.

Policy D.4

Arterial Roadways with Residential Uses: Monitor pressures for land use change and protect residential character of heavily traveled corridors that remain in predominantly single-family use.

Strategies

D.4.1 Strictly limit non-residential uses to locations where traffic and other pressures make road frontage less desirable for residential use.

D.4.2 Maintain residential zoning along residential arterial roadways.

D.4.3 Permit compatible “live-work” uses with appropriate controls along residential arterial roadways (see Economic Development Strategy E.4.1).

D.4.4 Establish procedures and standards to permit introduction of local-serving professional offices, services, and other uses that maintain a single-family residential scale in selected situations along residential arterial roadways.

Policy D.5

Older Industrial Areas: Maintain sufficient industrial zoning and uses to support their role in the Huntington economy (heavy commercial such as construction trades and automobile repair, warehousing/storage, etc.) while improving the appearance of older industrial areas and minimizing their impacts on adjacent, non-industrial uses.

Strategies

D.5.1 Evaluate the Town's industrial zoning districts to ensure that they contain sufficient land and permit uses appropriate for current needs.

D.5.2 Strengthen industrial use standards in order to minimize impacts on adjacent non-industrial (particularly residential) properties (landscaping/buffers, light, noise, etc.).

D.5.3 Enact basic design standards to improve the visual character of industrial uses (landscaping, outdoor storage, etc.).

Policy D.6

Development Regulations: Modernize and update development regulations for greater consistency, predictability, and effectiveness.

Strategies

D.6.1 Strengthen standards for design character and quality (scale of commercial development, façade/architectural treatment, access management, corridor landscaping, single-family residential compatibility, etc.) to improve economic viability and encourage walkable centers.

D.6.2 Evaluate existing zoning within the Town's commercial areas (hamlet centers, corridors, etc.) to identify zoning designations most appropriate to local conditions (including replacing the "one size fits all" C-6 General Business Zoning District).

D.6.3 Develop a model mixed-use hamlet center zoning classification(s) to create walkable centers with higher standards for design quality.

D.6.4 Incorporate provisions to implement other plan policies (e.g., minimum open space set asides and conservation subdivisions that cluster development per Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.8; strengthening of affordable housing requirements for rezoning per Housing Strategy G.2.1).

D.6.5 Reduce the number of zoning districts through consolidation or elimination of unnecessary or duplicative districts.

Eliminate single use districts while establishing clear performance standards in districts where they are permitted and necessary.

D.6.6 Reduce the need for rezonings and variances by more clearly defining expectations and standards for development in the Zoning Ordinance.

- For minor developments that do not exceed identified thresholds, emphasize as-of-right development with defined standards rather than conditional use/special use permits.
- Establish clear standards for conditional/special use permits for major developments that exceed the thresholds.

D.6.7 Establish a public/institutional zoning districts (applicable to schools, churches, etc.) to enhance review of proposed developments or conversions to other uses.

D.6.8 Incorporate provisions and incentives for green building techniques into the Town code as part of a “Sustainable Huntington” initiative.

Policy D.7

**Inter-municipal Cooperation:
Work with adjacent municipalities to address the impacts of developments of regional significance.**

Strategies

D.7.1 Work with the Town of Babylon to reinforce the Route 110 corridor’s position as a major employment center by addressing land use, transportation, infrastructure, and related issues in a coordinated manner.

D.7.2 Work with the Towns of Babylon, Smithtown and Islip to ensure the orderly and responsible development of the Sagtikos Regional Development Zone in the southeast corner of the Town of Huntington.

D.7.3 Closely monitor the potential impact on traffic and real estate demand in the Town of Huntington due to developments in adjacent municipalities.

D.7.4 Explore the establishment of regional planning agencies as authorized by New York State law for areas of regional significance, including the Route 110 corridor and Sagtikos Regional Development Zone.

6.4 Generalized Future Land Use Map

The Generalized Future Land Use Map (Figure 6.3) identifies the desired general pattern of future land use in Huntington for application of the policies and strategies contained in the Land Use Element and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. It does not replace the Town's current Zoning Map, but rather provides a framework for identifying zoning changes needed to implement the plan policies and strategies.

Recognizing that the Town is largely built out and most existing uses are well accepted, the Generalized Future Land Use Map preserves the present development pattern as the basis for future uses while indicating areas experiencing pressures for change where modifications could be achieved over time consistent with the goals, policies, and strategies. These areas include the Melville Employment Center, major commercial corridors (Jericho Turnpike and Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike) and minor commercial corridors (New York Avenue north of Jericho Turnpike, Larkfield Road, portions of Route 25A, etc.). All are identified as susceptible to obsolescence or pressures for development/re-development (see Land Use Policy D.2). In addition, the Land Use Map recognizes Huntington's unincorporated hamlet centers as a valuable land use pattern that should be maintained and enhanced.

The Generalized Future Land Use Map includes the following categories of land use:

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- School/SUNY

- Parks, Recreation & Conservation Land
- Melville Employment Center

In addition, the map indicates through generalized "overlay" designations the areas that are susceptible to change. These designations are:

- Unincorporated Village/Hamlet Center
- Major Commercial/Mixed Use Activity Center
- Minor Commercial/Mixed Use Activity Center
- Major Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use
- Minor Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use

Land Use Categories

Residential (Low Density, Medium Density, and High Density)

The three categories of residential land use shown on the Land Use Map vary by density according to existing zoning and development patterns, as follows:

- **Low Density Residential:** Single-family residential with a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet (R-20, R-40, and R-80 zoning districts)
- **Medium Density Residential:** Single-family residential with a minimum lot size between 10,000 and 20,000 square feet (R-10 and R-15 zoning districts)
- **High Density Residential:** Single-family residential with a minimum lot size less than 10,000 square feet, two-family, and multi-family areas (R-7, R-5, R-3M, and R-RM zoning districts)

The intent is to maintain and preserve the established character of these neighborhoods through conservation strategies and targeted interventions where necessary to

address undesirable change (e.g., deteriorating housing conditions or pressures for land use conversion along heavily traveled residential arterials).

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.1, D.4, D.6

Commercial

Based on present zoning, the commercial land use category largely reflects the existing pattern of commercial retail, service, and office uses in the Town of Huntington. Most of these areas are zoned C-6 General Business. A key land use recommendation is to replace this "one size fits all" zoning with regulations and standards tailored to the varying characteristics of Huntington's different commercial areas.

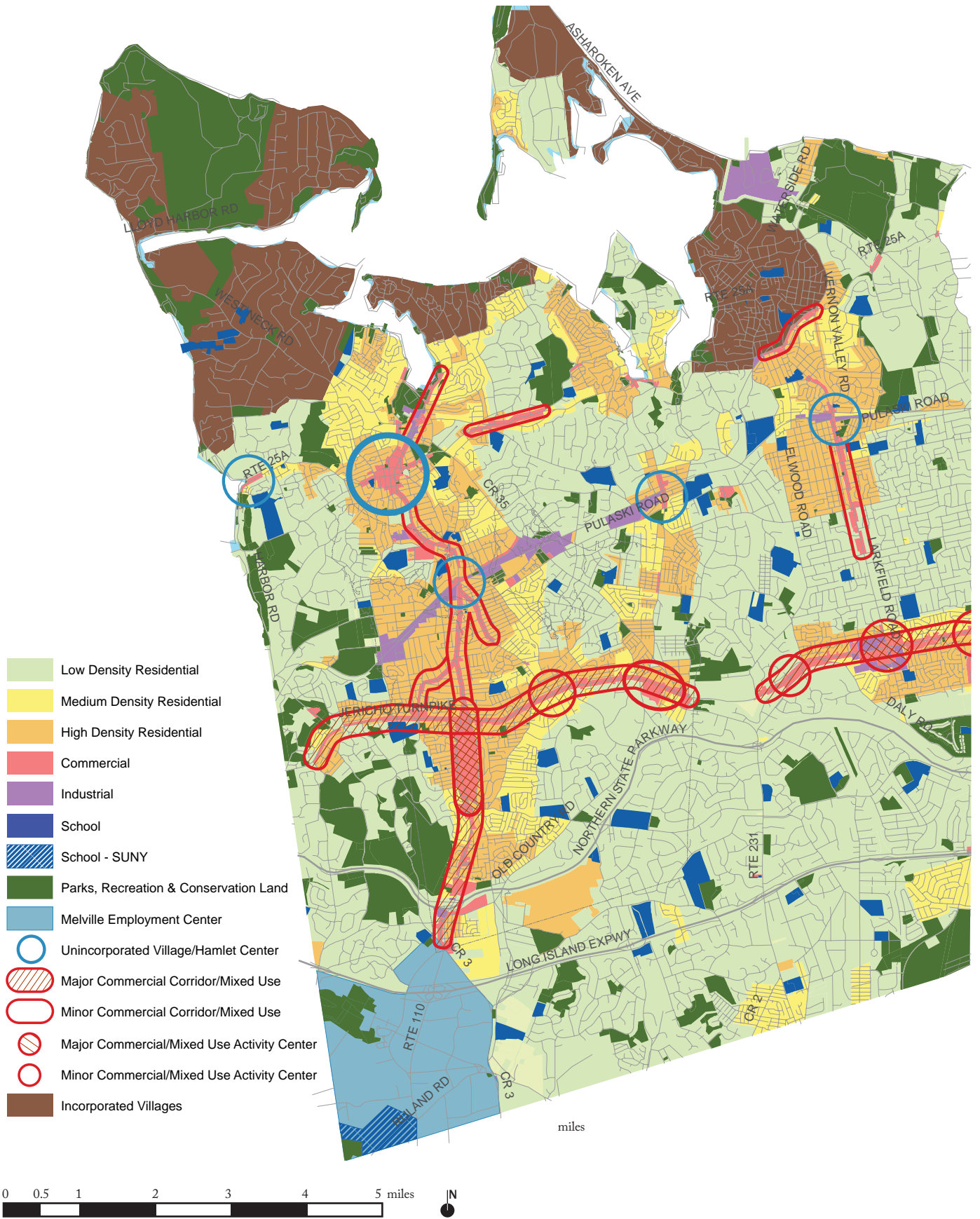
In addition, commercial uses are generally more susceptible to obsolescence and change than residential ones and thus are candidates for the selective introduction of non-retail uses to establish more integrated, mixed-use development patterns. The Corridor/Mixed Use, Activity Center, and Unincorporated Village/Hamlet Center designations shown as "overlays" on the Future Land Use Map provide direction to achieve this recommendation.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.1, D.2, D.3, D.6

Industrial

The industrial land use category applies to industrially zoned land outside of the Melville Employment Center. Because of its limited and diminishing supply and its importance to Huntington's economy, the plan calls for maintaining industrial uses, improving their appearance, and minimizing impacts on adjacent non-industrial uses. The exception to this general recommendation is that industrial land at the Jericho Turnpike/Larkfield

Figure 6.3 Generalized Future Land Use



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Road intersection should be reevaluated for inclusion in a proposed Major Commercial/Mixed Use Activity Center.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.5, D.6

Schools

Public schools are shown as a separate category on the Future Land Use Map to emphasize their importance as public resources/community facilities positively influencing Huntington's land use pattern and quality of life.

Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Lands

This category includes both public parks and conservation areas and lands used for outdoor recreation, which in some cases may not be permanently protected as open space. This designation reflects the plan recommendation to create a public open space/recreation zoning district and a potential second new district to apply to private recreational/institutional open space (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.10).

Melville Employment Center

Melville contains Huntington's most complex pattern of land uses, which combined with one of Huntington's only remaining reservoirs of undeveloped land has made it the subject of more site plan applications and proposed rezones than any other community in the Town. This concentration of activity indicates the need for a fresh look at Melville's land use patterns and related infrastructure needs such as roads and sewage disposal. Future growth and change in Melville should be managed to maintain its position as an employment hub, address impacts such as traffic and schools, and improve the character of development. To

accomplish this, an integrated land use, transportation, and infrastructure plan should be prepared as a supplemental study reinforcing the Comprehensive Plan. This study should be coordinated with the Town of Babylon.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.2, D.6, D.7

Overlay Designations

This category applies to Huntington's traditional villages: Cold Spring Harbor, East Northport, Greenlawn, Huntington Station, and Huntington Village. The existing character and scale of these villages should be preserved, maintained and enhanced by seeking opportunities to promote compatible mixed uses, such as apartments or offices over stores (see Land Use Strategy D.1.3). Application of such strategies should be sensitive to the established scale, character, and uses of each individual village.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.1, D.6

Major Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use

This category applies to commercial portions of Jericho Turnpike and Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike. These areas have the potential to support mixed commercial, residential, and office uses consistent with good planning, design, and access management principles, mitigation of potential infrastructure impacts, and protection of adjacent residential areas per Land Use Policy D.1. While Route 110 south of Jericho Turnpike is less suitable for introduction of residential uses, the Future Land Use Map reflects a need to improve the present development pattern through design guidelines and access management strategies.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.1, D.2, D.6

Minor Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use

This category applies to smaller scale, generally older commercial corridors located north of Jericho Turnpike, including portions of Route 25A, New York Avenue and corridors leading into it, and Larkfield Road between East Northport and Jericho Turnpike. The visual quality and economic viability of these corridors should be maintained through the selective introduction of residential and other mixed uses, access management and parking strategies, and design standards that promote a more pedestrian-oriented scale and character.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.3, D.6

Major Commercial/Mixed-Use Activity Center

This category applies to two primary "nodes" or centers of activity along the Town's major commercial corridors:

- The existing commercial center at Walt Whitman Mall, extending north to the Route 110/New York Avenue/Jericho Turnpike intersection.
- A proposed new focus of commercial/mixed-use activity at the Jericho Turnpike/Larkfield Road intersection.

Characterized by good north-south as well as east-west highway access, these centers are suitable for relatively intense commercial and complementary residential/mixed uses with controls to address impacts on infrastructure, community facilities, and nearby neighborhoods. The plan calls for the preparation of guidelines for the likely future expansion or redevelopment of Walt Whitman Mall to address community impacts and provide needed infrastructure improvements. The New York

Avenue/Jericho Turnpike and Jericho Turnpike/Larkfield Road intersections are proposed for future redevelopment as mixed-use centers (commercial with complementary residential and office uses) with quality design standards and pedestrian-friendly public amenities.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D.2, D.6

Minor Commercial/Mixed-Use Activity Center

Several locations along Jericho Turnpike with north-south as well as east-west are designated as minor commercial/mixed-use activity centers. These locations are suitable for redevelopment over time into mixed-use centers (commercial with complementary residential and office uses), but at a smaller scale and intensity than the major commercial/mixed-use activity centers. Like the major activity centers, minor commercial/mixed-use activity centers should be developed with a high standard of design quality and public amenities to create an attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment. In addition, mitigation measures should be incorporated as necessary to address potential infrastructure and neighborhood impacts.

Relevant Land Use Policies: D. 2, D. 6

7

economic development

7.1 Overview

7.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

7.3 Policies and Strategies

Goal

- 1. Promote a healthy, diversified, and sustainable economy that provides a strong tax base, needed goods and services, and employment opportunities for Huntington residents.**

7.1 Overview

The Town of Huntington benefits from a robust local economy supported by diverse employment sectors and a strong non-residential tax base, which are important components of a sustainable community structure. The strength of the economy contributes to a high quality of life for the Town's residents and the image of an attractive place for businesses to locate. Nearly one-third of the Town's residents who work outside the home have jobs in the Town of Huntington. This can be attributed to the large number of office and industrial employers that are concentrated in the Melville employment center, as well as to the large number of jobs in the retail sector.¹

Retail Base

The Town of Huntington has a varied retail base that is supported by a strong consumer market. It has been estimated that the annual retail expenditure potential of Town residents will be \$1.68 billion in 2010, increased from \$1.54 billion in 2000. The annual retail expenditure potential of residents of nearby communities who shop in Huntington is projected at \$809.0 million in 2010, up from \$751.4 million in 2000. Non-resident employees are projected to potentially contribute another \$52.5 million annually in 2010, compared to \$44.1 million in 2000.



Retail opportunities in the Town range from “Mom and Pop” operations to national chains and can be found in every form—from big boxes and strip malls to Main Streets and pedestrian-oriented, mixed use districts that make vital contributions to community character and sense of place. The Walt Whitman Mall, Huntington Village, and Jericho Turnpike represent large concentrations of retail jobs in the Town. The retail real estate market in the Town of Huntington is generally strong, as evidenced by low vacancies in all types of retail space.

It has been estimated that up to an additional 816,000 square feet of retail space can be absorbed by 2025. However, this potential will be impacted by major retail development underway in adjacent towns, in particular the area of Babylon, Smithtown, and Islip referred to as the Sagtikos Regional Development Zone (see Land Use Strategy D.7.2). As with all real estate sectors in the Town of Huntington, there is little vacant land available for future development. Therefore, new retail space will have to be constructed to replace obsolescent retail uses, on infill sites, and in compact, mixed-use centers in order to accommodate the anticipated growth.

Office and Industrial Base

Huntington's employment economy is driven primarily by the Route 110 Corridor and the Melville Employment Center—taxes from the Huntington portion of the Route 110 Corridor accounted for 20 percent of the Town's budget in 2004.² At that time there were over 135,000 jobs in the entire Route 110 corridor (including the Town of Babylon) provided by major employers such as Nikon, Newsday, Underwriters Laboratory, Farmingdale State University, and vari-

ous aerospace and biotechnology companies. Other companies and service providers are located throughout the Town, including a major concentration near Huntington Village and Huntington Hospital.

According to an analysis conducted by Economics Research Associates, the Town's office market in 2003 comprised approximately 9.8 million square feet located in 185 buildings, the majority (95 percent) located in Melville. The 11.7 percent vacancy rate in the fourth quarter of 2003 was close to the historical average of 11.3 percent, indicating that Huntington remained a desirable place for businesses to locate. The decision by Canon to relocate its North American headquarters to Melville is further confirmation of this desirable trend. While Communications and Utilities are the fastest growing sectors of the Town's economy, the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sectors continue to employ the largest number of people. Additionally, aerospace, biotechnology and other high-tech firms continue to fuel Huntington's role as a national hub of research-based businesses.

The Town of Huntington contained 6.3 million square feet of industrial space in 149 buildings in 2003, like office space mostly located in Melville. Industrial space is in



¹ More complete background information on economic conditions and trends in the Town of Huntington is provided in two separate reports completed by Economics Research Associates: *Demographic and Economic Analysis for Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update* and *Retail Market Analysis for Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update*. Unless otherwise indicated, figures cited in this chapter are drawn from these reports.

² www.route110.org/actionplan2005.html

relatively high demand, as indicated by a 3.1 percent vacancy rate in the fourth quarter of 2003 compared to the Western Suffolk market with 5.5 percent vacancy and the Eastern Suffolk market with almost 18 percent vacancy in the same period. However, the high cost of land and lower return on investment for industrial buildings means that industrial space is being supplanted by higher value office development.

It is estimated that there will be demand for an additional 2.86 million square feet of office space by 2025 in Huntington. While the industrial market has been affected by the general decline in industrial employment, there will still be demand for build-to-suit industrial space, especially for warehousing/storage operations related to the Town's strategic location.

Because there is little remaining available land for the development of office or industrial real estate, developers and the Town will have to look to solutions such as building recycling and higher density office zoning if the demand is to be met.

Route 110 Partnership

The Route 110 Partnership is a public/private partnership formed by the Towns of Babylon and Huntington to promote economic revitalization of the Route 110 Corridor as "Long Island's Main Street for Technology." The Partnership's 2005 Plan for Action focuses on promoting development of the "nascent biotech cluster that is currently growing in and around the Corridor" into a fifth national cluster of biotechnology industries.³ The Partnership will leverage local resources found within the corridor and the region, such as existing technology businesses and the Cold Springs

Harbor Laboratory. Universities are a key catalyst for growth in biotechnology clusters, a role played in the Route 110 Corridor by Farmingdale State University.

Cost of Living

While the Huntington's retail and industrial economy has been growing steadily, the increased cost of goods and services—including housing, property taxes, childcare, transportation, etc.—translates into a high cost of living, which makes it more difficult for families and individuals to afford to live in the Town. Huntington's suburban pattern reduces housing choices and makes its residents dependent upon private automobiles for transportation, adding to the cost of living. Because many towns on Long Island are nearing build-out, there is limited new housing construction to moderate this part of the cost of living equation. Strong demand for housing from recent immigrants and newly formed households also tighten the housing market.

While Huntington continues to have the highest median household income in all of Suffolk County, moderate and middle-income members of the local workforce have been priced out of the real estate market due to the rise of both rental rates and home prices. Housing prices have recently moderated since their peak but are still high, particularly when combined with other cost factors such as property taxes and home heating bills. As a result, the Town continues to have a difficult time retaining younger residents, including the segment of the population aged 25 to 34, which makes up an important part of the workforce. Thus the need for affordable workforce housing is an economic development as well as a housing issue.⁴

The high cost of living means that the Town will increasingly need to import workers for the low-paying service jobs that support the overall economy, such as food service, janitorial and administrative workers. In recent years, middle-income professionals have also been priced out of the local market. If this trend continues it will require skilled workers to be imported as well in order to keep the economy growing. More discussion on the topic of housing affordability and cost of living can be found in Chapter 9.

Sustainable Economic Activity Related to Huntington's Traditional Resources

Historically, Huntington's economy was based on maritime and agricultural activity tied to its natural resources. These traditional pursuits have been replaced by contemporary forms of employment such as office, retail and services, and construction; agriculture in particular has disappeared as a significant component of the Town's economy. Nevertheless, commercial fishing and shellfishing remain economically important, water-dependent activities along the Town's north shore, including Cold Spring, Huntington, Centerport, and Northport Harbors. Two documents prepared by the Town pursuant to New York State's Coastal Management Program – the Huntington Harbor Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and the Draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for All Unincorporated Areas – address issues related to Huntington's water-dependent economy. These documents define local policies and sub-policies to address 13 regional policies defined by the Long Island Sound Coastal Zone Management Program. Policy 10 is intended to protect existing water-dependent

³ The four established biotechnology clusters are located in Boston, North Carolina's Research Triangle, San Francisco, and San Diego.

⁴ Workforce housing differs from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development definition of affordable housing in that it is targeted towards middle-income wage earners. A typical definition is housing affordable to individuals and families earning between 60% and 120% of the median income. According to the 2005 Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission Report, the median price of housing in Western Suffolk County was \$410,000 as of September 2005, or 4.2 times median family income. The report quotes Pearl Kamer, chief economist for the Long Island Association, as stating that "about 10% of Long Islanders on average can afford a median priced home today." According to Money Magazine's Best Places to Live, the estimated 2007 median value of housing in Huntington was \$631,188 (see Chapter 9).

7.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

commercial, industrial, and recreational uses and to promote sustainable use of centers of marine commercial activity in the Town of Huntington. Policy 11 is intended to promote sustainable use of living marine resources in Long Island Sound, including commercial and recreational use of the Sound's finfish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine plants.

In addition, the Town's history and heritage as reflected in its traditional built and natural environments are important assets that contribute both to sustainable economic activity and to community character and sense of place. The Long Island North Shore Heritage Area, which encompasses Huntington and some 64 other municipalities, is designed in part to foster economic revitalization and community renewal through preservation and sustainable use of traditional resources (e.g., heritage tourism).

Based on the above discussion, key economic development issues in the Town of Huntington include:

- As the Town approaches build-out, there is a lack of available land that can be developed to accommodate the anticipated growth in the office and industrial sectors of the economy. Additionally, if current trends in retail real estate prevail, there may not be enough vacant land in the Town to accommodate the anticipated growth in the retail sector. This places a premium on infill development and the redevelopment of existing obsolescent uses.
- Various infrastructure constraints may hinder economic development in the Town of Huntington. Traffic congestion (which also impacts the quality of life of residents), a lack of public parking, and inconvenient public transit can diminish the desirability of locations such as along Route 110 and near interchanges with the Long Island Expressway. Biotechnology firms may choose not to locate on the Route 110 Corridor because of a lack of sewer access. These infrastructure deficiencies need to be addressed if continued economic development in the Town is to be sustained.
- While the public/private partnership to position the Route 110 Corridor as a national technology cluster is well accepted, there is some concern in the business community about an over-emphasis on the growth of the biotech/high-tech industries. In order to create a sustainable local economy, the Town needs to foster an employment base with broad-ranging skills and balance the needs of a diverse set of industries.
- The cost of living in the Town of Huntington needs to be addressed if a diverse resident

workforce is to be maintained. Moderating its impacts will contribute to a demographically sustainable population and workforce.

- In addition to their contributions to quality of life and environmental sustainability, natural, historic, and cultural resources generate significant levels of economic activity. Commercial and recreational fisheries, heritage tourism, and the cultural and performing arts are examples of resource-based activities that contribute to a healthy, diversified economy.

Key objectives and recommendations to address these issues and achieve the overall goal of a healthy, sustainable, and diversified economy include:

- Maintain a strong office and industrial employment base.
 - › Promote a biotechnology hub within the Melville Employment Center.
 - › Encourage smaller-scale employment/office uses to help revitalize older commercial corridors.
 - › Address transportation and utility infrastructure constraints.
- Maintain a strong, diversified retail base.
 - › Enhance the retail character of unincorporated village centers.
 - › Encourage reinvestment in older commercial areas.
 - › Encourage mixed-use development that will bring retailers and customers closer to each other while making more efficient use of the limited real estate supply.

- Address cost of living factors that impact economic viability.
- Promote business start-ups and development.
- Promote public/private economic development partnerships.
- Encourage economic activities relating to Huntington's heritage and historic water-dependent economy.

7.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy E.1

Maintain a strong office and industrial employment base.

Strategies

E.1.1 Promote the Melville Employment Center through the Route 110 Partnership, including a focus on establishing a fifth national cluster of biotechnology industries.

- Prepare an integrated land use/infrastructure plan for the Melville area to define its capacity for additional office/industrial development and the necessary supporting infrastructure improvements (roadway, sewers, etc.) (see Geographic Focal Areas Section 7.3.1).
- Modify zoning and development regulations as needed to provide for the levels of office/industrial development identified by the plan while addressing its community impacts (traffic congestion, appearance, etc.).
- Define a phased program of roadway improvements and transportation management measures to address present traffic congestion and projected future traffic volumes.
- Establish public sewer capacity to serve office/industrial development.
- Explore creation of a Melville Sewer District (originally proposed in the 1980s) or connection to an existing district.
- Develop a strategy to retain land for high-quality industrial uses such as biotech or bio-med industries.
- Identify and market potential sites for biotechnology-related businesses.

E.1.2 Encourage smaller-scale employment/professional office uses as part of a revitalization strategy for older commercial corridors such as New York Avenue in Huntington Station.

E.1.3 Maintain a viable base of industrial/heavy commercial uses needed to support Huntington's service economy (see Land Use Policy D.5).

Policy E.2

Maintain a strong, diversified retail base that contributes to quality of life and provides necessary and desirable goods and services.

Strategies

E.2.1 Reinforce the retail character of hamlet and unincorporated village centers as destinations.

- Encourage a mix of national, regional, and local tenants as well as cultural and entertainment uses that can act as anchors (e.g., the cultural center under development in Huntington Station).
- Reinforce and promote specialty shopping niches (e.g., a potential "antique district" at New York Avenue and East 18th Street in Huntington Station).
- Promote artists' lofts and other live-work spaces in commercial corridors.
- Enhance transit hubs by providing better linkages between LIRR stations and adjacent retail and residential areas (Huntington Station, East Northport, Greenlawn)

- Provide coherent, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly shopping environments in hamlet and unincorporated village centers through:
 - › Coordinated streetscape, signage, and other public improvements.
 - › Zoning regulations that maintain traditional character and scale and limit auto-oriented uses.
 - › Zoning regulations that require retail uses on the ground floor in village shopping districts.

E.2.2 Amend the C-6 General Business Zoning District to tailor zoning to the different characteristics of Huntington’s retail districts.

E.2.3 Provide targeted financial assistance, incentives, and technical support to encourage reinvestment in older commercial properties.

Policy E.3

Address cost of living factors that affect the viability of Huntington’s economy.

Strategies

E.3.1 Support a regional effort to address escalating school property taxes through legislation and reform at the state level.

E.3.2 Address the need for workforce housing (see Housing Policy G.2).⁵

E.3.3 As recommended by the Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission, support state legislation that would provide a formula for supplemental financial aid for school districts with workforce housing development sites while ensuring that other state school aid programs are maintained at full funding (see Community Facilities Policy C.2).

E.3.4 Support the provision of affordable childcare for working families.

Policy E.4

Promote business start-ups and development in Huntington.

Strategies

E.4.1 Adopt zoning and regulatory provisions to make it easier to start a business.

- “Streamline” permitting processes for small businesses.
- Enact a minor home occupation category to make it legal to conduct a business that results in no external impacts in homes in residential districts (e.g., consulting, “telecommuting” employment opportunities).
- Establish live-work (living accommodations with space for non-traditional, low-intensity business activities such as artists’ studios) as a permitted use in appropriate locations (e.g., heavily-traveled residential arterials), with standards to address issues such as traffic, parking, signage, etc.

⁵ Workforce housing differs from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development definition of affordable housing in that it is targeted towards middle-income wage earners. A typical definition is housing affordable to individuals and families earning between 60% and 120% of the median income. According to the 2005 Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission Report, the median price of housing in Western Suffolk County was \$410,000 as of September 2005, or 4.2 times median family income. The report quotes Pearl Kamer, chief economist for the Long Island Association, as stating that “about 10% of Long Islanders on average can afford a median priced home today.” The report further states that “aspiring homeowners, especially our young people just starting out in the workforce and our middle class working families, are finding it increasingly difficult to find housing they can afford, causing many of them to seriously consider leaving for more affordable regions.”

E.4.2 Maintain up-to-date inventories of properties available for businesses in conjunction with local realtors.

E.4.3 Consider establishing small business incubators.

E.4.4 Identify opportunities to accommodate community-based businesses and entrepreneurs in revitalization activities (e.g., Huntington Station).

Policy E.5

Promote economic development through public/private partnerships among different levels of government; economic development agencies; businesses; and educational, research, and healthcare institutions.

Strategies

E.5.1 Continue the Huntington Economic Development Corporation's progress in revitalizing Huntington Station.

E.5.2 Continue to participate in the Route 110 Partnership Route 110 economic development revitalization initiative (see Strategy E.1.1).

E.5.3 Partner with other agencies, institutions, and businesses on initiatives to support economic development in Huntington, including but not limited to:

- Suffolk County Department of Economic Development/IDA
- Chambers of Commerce
- Huntington Hospital
- Farmingdale University
- Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory
- Huntington School Districts
- Private Businesses

Policy E.6

Encourage sustainable economic activity related to Huntington's historic heritage and traditional resources.

Strategies

E.6.1 Preserve Huntington's fisheries industry in a manner that minimizes impacts on scenic, recreational, residential, and other contemporary uses while strengthening the historic commercial value of the Long Island Sound fisheries resource.

- Implement the policies and associated actions of the Huntington Harbor Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and the Draft LWRP for All Unincorporated Areas related to water-dependent uses and sustainable use of living marine resources (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Policy A.3)
- Reevaluate opportunities to provide improved shoreline access and support preferred shoreline uses.

E.6.2 Encourage heritage tourism based on preservation and interpretation of Huntington's natural, cultural, and historic resources within the context of the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area Initiative (see Community Character Policy B.3)

8

transportation

8.1 Overview

8.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

8.3 Policies and Strategies

Goal

1. **Provide a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system that provides residents with convenient choices for accessing destinations.**

8.1 Overview

The Town of Huntington has an extensive transportation system that supports multiple modes of travel. Highways, arterials, collectors, and local streets provide access to all parts of the Town. Commuter rail and bus service complements the mobility offered by the road network. The Long Island Railroad's Port Jefferson Branch service is a popular option for commuters bound for Manhattan. Sidewalks are available for pedestrians in many parts of Huntington, particularly in traditional hamlet centers and along older corridors such as New York Avenue in Huntington Station. While bicycle facilities are limited, the Town is taking steps to promote this travel mode.

Despite the fact that the Town's transportation system includes multiple modes, the vast majority of trips take place in private automobiles. The U.S. Census data reports that there was a slight decrease in automobile use for work trips (from 84.6% to 83.5%) and an increase in the use of public transportation (from 9.9% to 10.6%) between 1990 and 2000. However, walking to work decreased as a percentage of all work trips from 1.8% to 1.3% during the same period.

8.1.1 Roads

The Town of Huntington is served by an extensive network of local, collector, arterial, and through roads that offer connections between all areas of the Town (Figure 8.1). The Long Island Expressway (I-495) and the Northern State Parkway are limited-access highways providing east-west access across the Town and all of Long Island. Principal arterial roadways include Jericho Turnpike and Route 25A (running east-west) and Route 110/ New York Avenue, Deer Park Road, and Commack Road (running north-south).

Huntington's roadway network developed over time from a rural system connecting village centers and as a result lacks the characteristics of a complete grid with east-west and north-south connections adequate to handle modern traffic volumes. All major corridors in the Town of Huntington are prone to traffic congestion, but the most significant backups occur on Route 110 from Huntington Village to Melville and along the Long Island Expressway, especially during peak commute periods. Specifically, Route 110 from the Northern State Parkway through Melville suffers from severe traffic congestion. Jericho Turnpike and Larkfield Road also experience heavy congestion.

Beyond the principal arterials, a number of minor arterial and collector roadways traverse the Town, linking commercial areas, residential neighborhoods, and other points of interest. Examples of these roads include Elwood Road, Larkfield Road, and Pulaski Road. Many of these roads provide access for a combination of residential and commercial land uses. They generally have adequate traffic flow, but congestion does occur along some corridors, particularly in commercial areas where drivers enter and exit the roadway from multiple driveways.



In older parts of Huntington, such as Huntington Village and the areas around the East Northport and Greenlawn LIRR stations, the local road system is a network of grid streets that provides alternative routes for drivers. In parts of the Town developed in the post-war period, the street system is generally composed of curvilinear residential streets. Many of these streets do not connect with each other and are difficult to navigate, especially for drivers who do not live in these neighborhoods.

Traffic congestion is a major issue and concern voiced by citizens throughout the comprehensive planning process. Opportunities to address congestion through new or expanded roads are limited by the predominantly built-out character of the Town and the historic roadway development pattern. Figure 8.2 provides an overall assessment of the degree of congestion on the Town's arterial roadway network. This figure was developed by updating data contained in the 1993 Comprehensive Plan based on comparison of daily traffic volume. In general, daily traffic counts have not increased appreciably over the last 10 to 15 years.

Roads in the Town (other than its incorporated villages) are owned and maintained



by three different jurisdictions: The Town of Huntington (local streets), Suffolk County (e.g., Pulaski and Greenlawn Roads), and New York State (e.g., Routes 25A and 110, Jericho Turnpike, and Northern State Parkway (Figure 8.3). Multi-jurisdictional ownership means that the Town does not control the major roadways within Huntington and affects the feasibility of accomplishing improvements such as coordinated signal timing.

8.1.2 Public Transportation

Public transportation in the Town of Huntington is provided by four different transit systems: the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and Long Island Bus (LI Bus) of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART), and Suffolk County Transit (ST) (see Figure 8.4). The LIRR and LI Bus provide services that link the Town of Huntington to New York City and Nassau County. ST provides bus service across Suffolk County and HART operates buses solely within the Town of Huntington.

The Town of Huntington is served by the Port Jefferson Branch of the LIRR, which is the most important public transportation link between the Town and New York City. During peak hours, service is offered with ten to fifteen minute headways on the electrified

portion of the LIRR Port Jefferson Branch. The electrified portion of this branch ends at Huntington Station, meaning that commuters traveling to New York City from Greenlawn and Northport must take infrequent diesel/electric service trains. There are very few direct access trains between these outer stations and Penn Station, forcing most riders to transfer to another service at Huntington, Hicksville, or Jamaica. Travel times to New York Penn Station range from 55 minutes from Cold Spring Harbor to 84 minutes from Northport. A significant number of commuters who take the LIRR drive to and from the stations.

The MTA's capital program includes the East Side Access project, which will bring LIRR trains into a new ten-track hall at Grand Central Terminal. This project is intended to relieve pressure at Penn Station and provide faster access to the east side office district of Midtown Manhattan. Scheduled for completion by 2013, it will make Long Island and Huntington more attractive places to live and work by increasing the speed, frequency, and travel options available via rail.

For years, the MTA has proposed to extend the electrification of the LIRR Port Jefferson Branch beyond Huntington Station. This development would allow the LIRR to operate

more frequent direct service to Manhattan. Should this electrification take place, service to Greenlawn and East Northport will improve. This will benefit commuters but also means that the two station areas will likely see more traffic and development pressure.

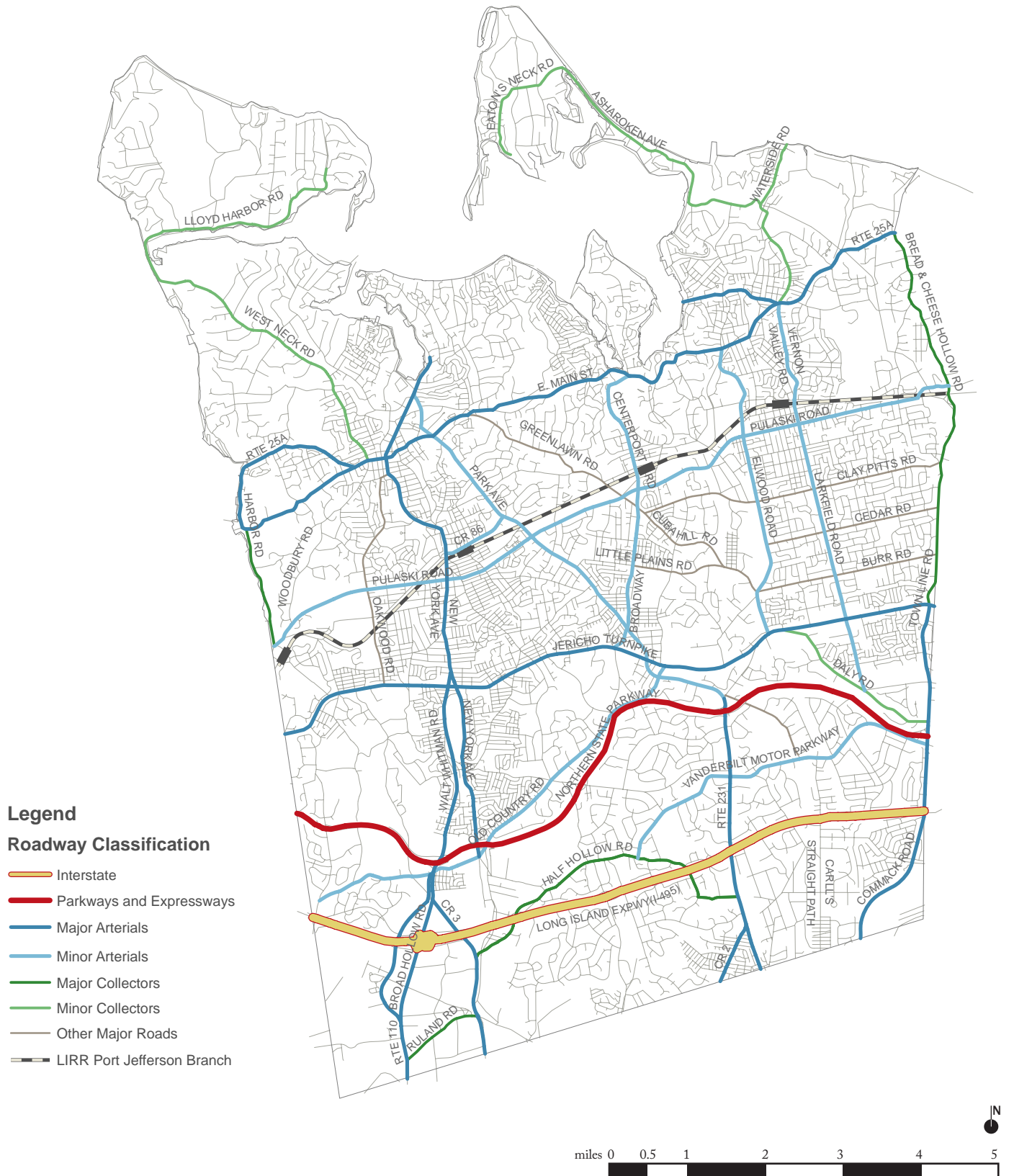
MTA operates three Long Island Bus routes across the Suffolk County line into the Town of Huntington. These routes connect the Walt Whitman Mall to Mineola and Melville to Hempstead and the Farmingdale LIRR station. These services operate with average headways of one hour and the Melville routes operate only during the work week.

Suffolk County Transit offers a number of routes that link the Town of Huntington to other municipalities in the eastern portion of Long Island. The S1 service travels the length of Route 110 from Halesite to Amityville in the Town of Babylon. It serves Huntington Village, the Walt Whitman Mall, and Melville with 15-30 minute headways throughout the day. Most other ST services operate only once per hour.

Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART) operates three fixed bus routes. These routes provide hourly service on weekdays linking important destinations within the Town of Huntington, including LIRR stations and commercial districts. During weekends they operate on a limited schedule on Saturday and do not operate on Sunday. In addition to the fixed routes, HART operates weekday morning and evening shuttle routes to the Huntington LIRR station from low density neighborhoods. In the evenings, the shuttle buses deliver passengers to the locations of their choice within specific service zones. HART also operates paratransit services for the disabled.



Figure 8.1 Existing Roadway Network



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

8.1.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Extensive and safe sidewalks and bicycle routes are important components of an intermodal transportation system that balances automobile use with other travel modes. Increasing opportunities to walk and bike are among the best ways to increase the share of trips that are taken by means other than the automobile.

Older neighborhoods in the Town contain an interconnected grid of commercial and residential streets. This street pattern often includes complete sidewalk networks, which enables residents, employees, and visitors to make some trips on foot rather than in an automobile. Newer, lower density areas with curvilinear street patterns are often more difficult for pedestrians to navigate due to factors such as a lack of sidewalks and long distances between intersections. In addition, destinations such as schools and parks are not always well connected by sidewalks to surrounding neighborhoods.

Bicycling is a growing travel mode throughout the United States that provides an alternative to the automobile for local trips. According to the 2000 Census, only 0.01% of all work trips in the Town of Huntington are made on bicycles. Cur-



rently, there is only one designated on-road bicycle route in the Town of Huntington. In order to increase the share of trips made by bicycle, the Town and NYSDOT have planned an extensive network of on-street bike lanes and routes as well as some paved, off-road paths. Existing and proposed bikeways are shown on Figure 8.5. Other efforts to improve bicycle mobility include installing bicycle storage facilities at the Huntington LIRR station and bike racks on HART buses.

In addition to pedestrian and bicycle improvements, traffic calming techniques can be used to reduce vehicular speeds on local streets and make them safer for all users.⁷

8.1.4 Parking

Because most of the Town of Huntington was developed with a relatively low-density, suburban pattern, parking is adequate in most areas. However, there are few areas in the Town where the parking supply does not meet demand, including Huntington Village and in the vicinity of some of the LIRR stations. Potential LIRR service improvements, including electrification and the East Side Access project, will exacerbate the parking shortage around the LIRR stations.



In Huntington Village, parking is available on-street and in public and private parking lots. The Town has added more parking in surface lots and found that the increased capacity is quickly filled. As Huntington Village continues to grow demand for parking will increase, but there is not enough land available to continue building surface lots without negatively affecting the fabric and character of the village. However, the idea of structured parking is generally opposed by residents, also evidencing concern regarding impacts on village character. There are several models for structured parking that could be investigated, including concealing the parking by “wrapping” it with residential and commercial uses or constructing a deck that blends into the natural contours of a sloping hillside.

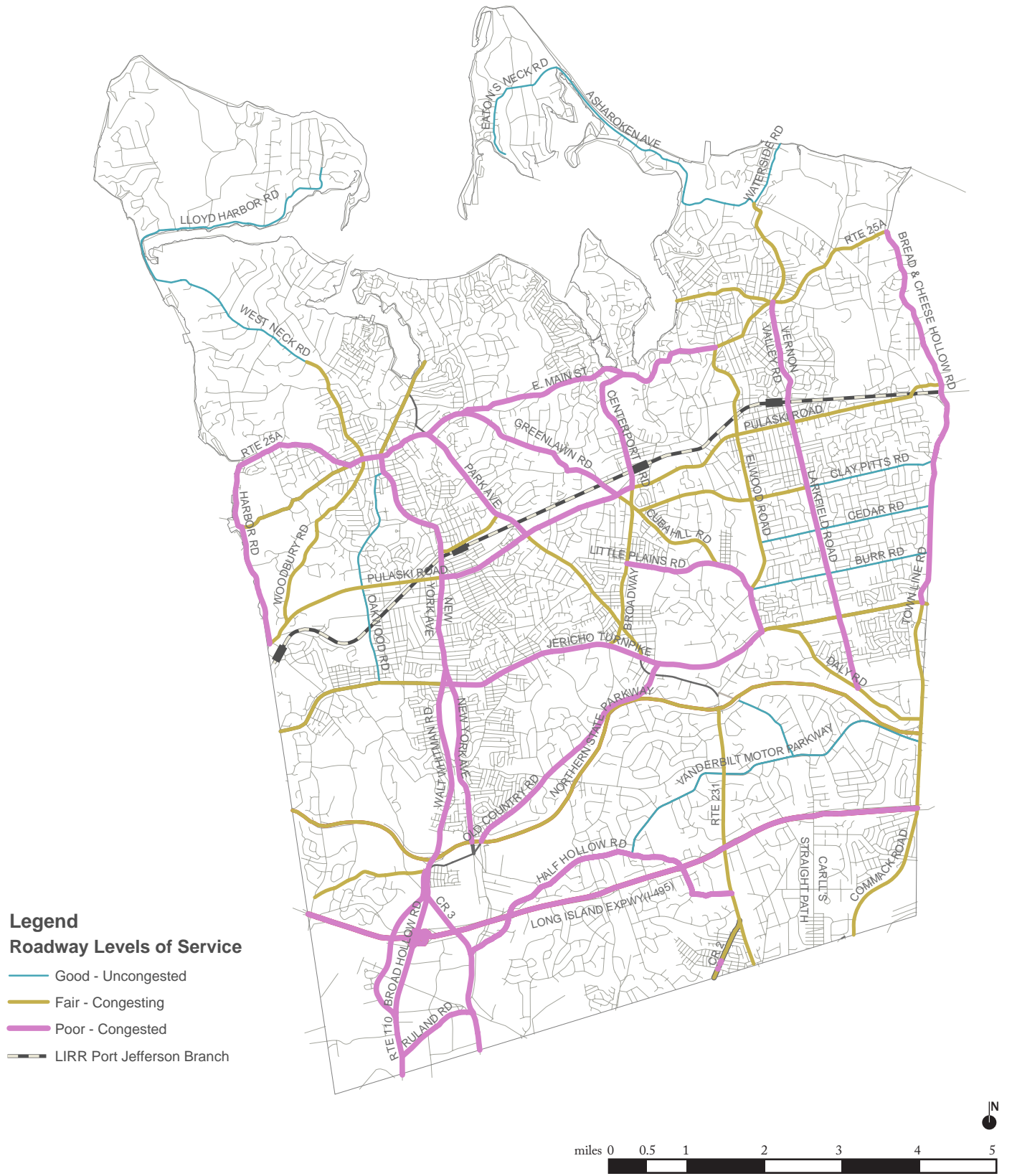
There are other issues associated with newer commercial corridors where there is abundant parking. Often, these parking areas are large expanses of impervious pavement, causing negative impacts such as increased stormwater runoff, “heat island” effects, and lower visual quality.

8.1.5 Programmed Transportation Improvements

In 2006 The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) published a new state-wide transportation plan (Transportation Strategies for a New Age: New York’s Transportation Plan for 2030). The plan’s vision for transportation in New York State in 2030 is “a seamless system in which travelers can conveniently shift between modes and operators to complete trips that meet their individual and business needs.” The plan asserts that limited opportunities and funding

⁷ Traffic calming refers to physical or operational measures to reduce vehicular speeds or traffic volumes, especially on local streets, and to address vehicular trips with origins and destinations outside a neighborhood. Examples of traffic calming techniques include four-way stop signs, signs alerting motorists as to their speed vs. the posted speed limit, traffic circles or roundabouts, raised crosswalks, textured pavement, on-street parking, and street narrowings, also known as “neckdowns”, “bulbouts” or “chokers” (often in conjunction with pedestrian crossings).

Figure 8.2 Roadway Level of Service



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

for capacity improvements mean that strategies such as travel demand management and operational techniques are keys to addressing congestion. At the state level the focus is on maintaining and improving “critical multi-modal corridors,” including I-495 on Long Island. The plan also promotes integration of transportation and land use planning at the local level, including “context-sensitive” transportation solutions and planning initiatives that promote higher population densities, transit-friendly development, and farmland preservation.

NYSDOT’s five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Long Island focuses on maintaining existing assets, including resurfacing of portions of Route 110 and Jericho Turnpike in Huntington. Capital improvement projects identified in the TIP for Huntington focus on Route 110, including:

- Drainage and intersection improvements to New York Avenue between Prime Avenue and Youngs Hill Road (Huntington Harbor).
- Improvements to the Route 110/New York Avenue/Jericho Turnpike intersection.
- Improvements to Route 110 between the Northern State Parkway and Long Island Expressway (I-495), including replacement of the Northern State Parkway bridge.

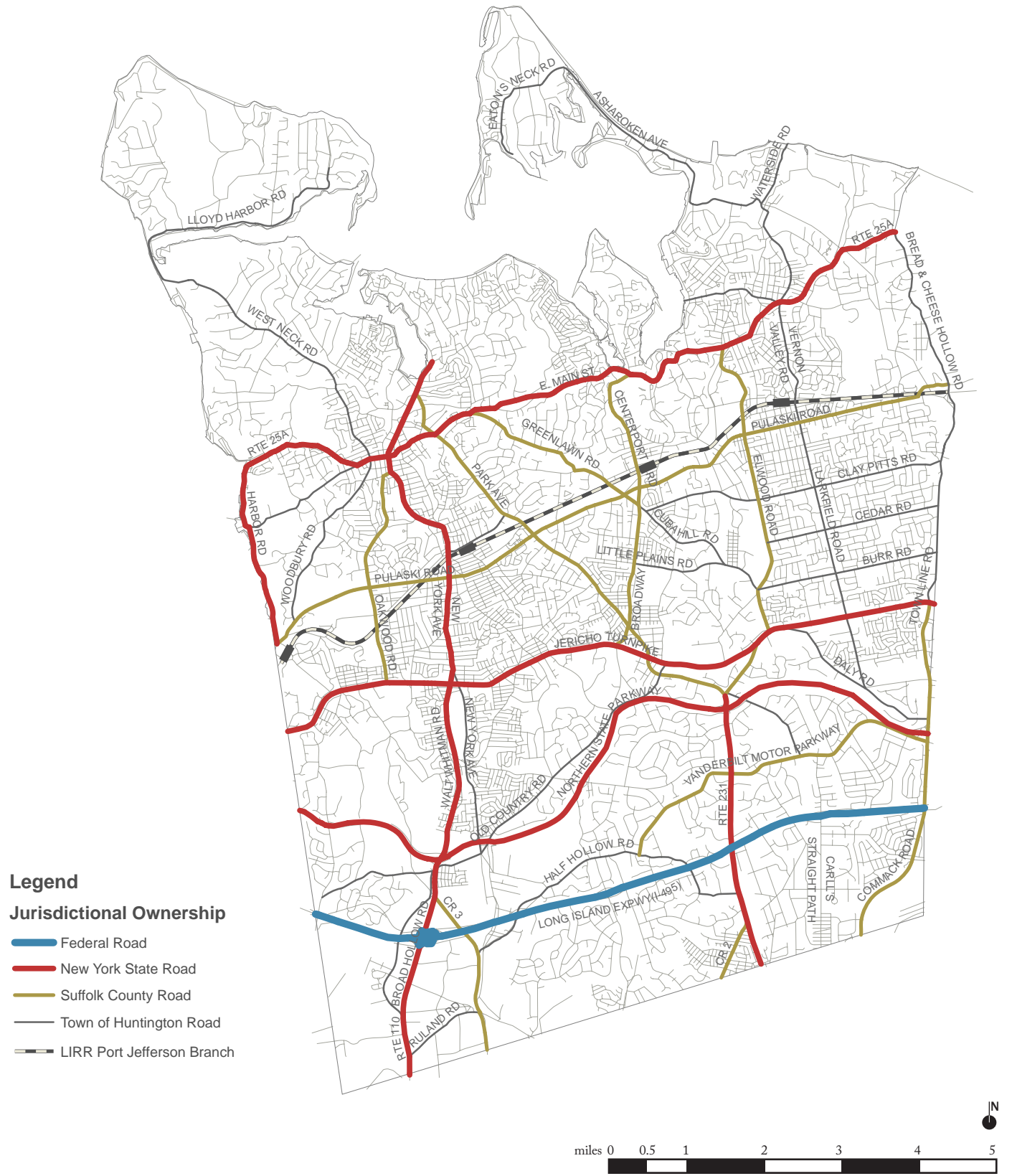
Suffolk County maintains approximately 45 miles of roads in the Town of Huntington. The County’s 2006–2008 Capital Program includes several projects in Huntington:

- Reconstruction of Pulaski Road (CR 11) from Larkfield Road to the Smithtown boundary, including intersection improvements and installation of turn lanes.

- Reconstruction of Pulaski Road (CR 11) from the Nassau/Suffolk County border to East Northport in five phases, including drainage improvements.
- Reconstruction of Pinelawn Road (CR 3) from Finn Court to the North Service Road of the Long Island Expressway, including installation of turn lanes, drainage, and aesthetic improvements.
- Intersection improvements and road widening on Park Avenue (CR 35) from Broadway-Greenlawn Road (CR 86) to the vicinity of Old Country Road in two phases.

In addition to the programmed state and county capital improvement projects, New York State has approved a Town of Huntington grant application for the reconstruction and interconnection of traffic signals along three miles of Larkfield Road in the vicinity of Jericho Turnpike.

Figure 8.3 Jurisdictional Ownership



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

8.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

Based on the above overview, the following are key transportation issues affecting the Town of Huntington and the quality of life of its citizens:

- As noted, traffic congestion is a key citizen concern. However, in general extensive road widening or construction of new roads is no longer a feasible or cost effective option to reduce traffic congestion in Huntington. In contrast to past attempts to “build our way out of congestion,” transportation planners now realize that—absent the use of other planning tools—adding lanes to expand capacity too often attracts increased traffic, ultimately resulting in more congestion. Present day solutions call for less reliance on capital-intensive improvements and more on targeted solutions, including:
 - › Integrated coordination and timing of traffic signals.²
 - › Targeted improvements such as turn lanes and intersection improvements to address congestion “hot spots”.
 - › Comprehensive system management approaches such as Intelligent Transportation Solutions³ and Transportation Demand Management.⁴
 - › Improvements to support alternative modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling and transit.
- The design of Jericho Turnpike and other post-war commercial corridors is geared primarily to automobiles and commercial

land uses. The prevailing design places little value on pedestrian convenience and welfare, including safety, comfort, and aesthetics. In addition, the proliferation of curb cuts along these corridors contributes to congestion and safety issues and makes landscaping or other visual/aesthetic improvements to the right-of-way difficult to undertake.

- Any new development in the Town of Huntington (or in neighboring jurisdictions where drivers travel on Huntington’s roads) will have an impact on the transportation network. Conversely, any changes to the transportation network will affect neighboring land uses. This connection between land use and transportation has often been overlooked in the past. However, many jurisdictions are now using integrated approaches to ensure that adequate transportation infrastructure is available to support planned land uses (e.g., through mitigation requirements for proposed developments based on traffic impacts). In addition, neighboring and overlapping governmental jurisdictions are exploring the concepts of regional and comprehensive planning as a means to ensure the adequacy of the shared transportation infrastructure.
- Public transportation is an integral component of Huntington’s transportation system that needs innovation and flexibility if it is to attract a greater share of trips taken within the Town.
- Bicycling and walking are environmentally-friendly modes of transportation that

complement public transit. As with transit, innovations and improvements are needed to significantly increase the number of cyclists and pedestrians in the Town of Huntington.

- Parking is abundant at many commercial centers and other destinations throughout the Town. In all areas, the impacts of parking on issues such as traffic circulation, visual character, and environmental quality need to be carefully evaluated. However, in Huntington Village and some of the other older commercial/main street business areas the parking supply is marginal or inadequate. A reexamination of structural solutions whose design and architectural elements can enhance visual appearance and utility and/or replace impervious and environmentally destructive expanses of asphalt with new green space should be considered.

The policies and strategies presented in Section 8.3 below are designed to address these issues by promoting a transportation system that significantly increases the share of trips in Huntington made by modes other than the automobile. They are intended to achieve several major objectives:

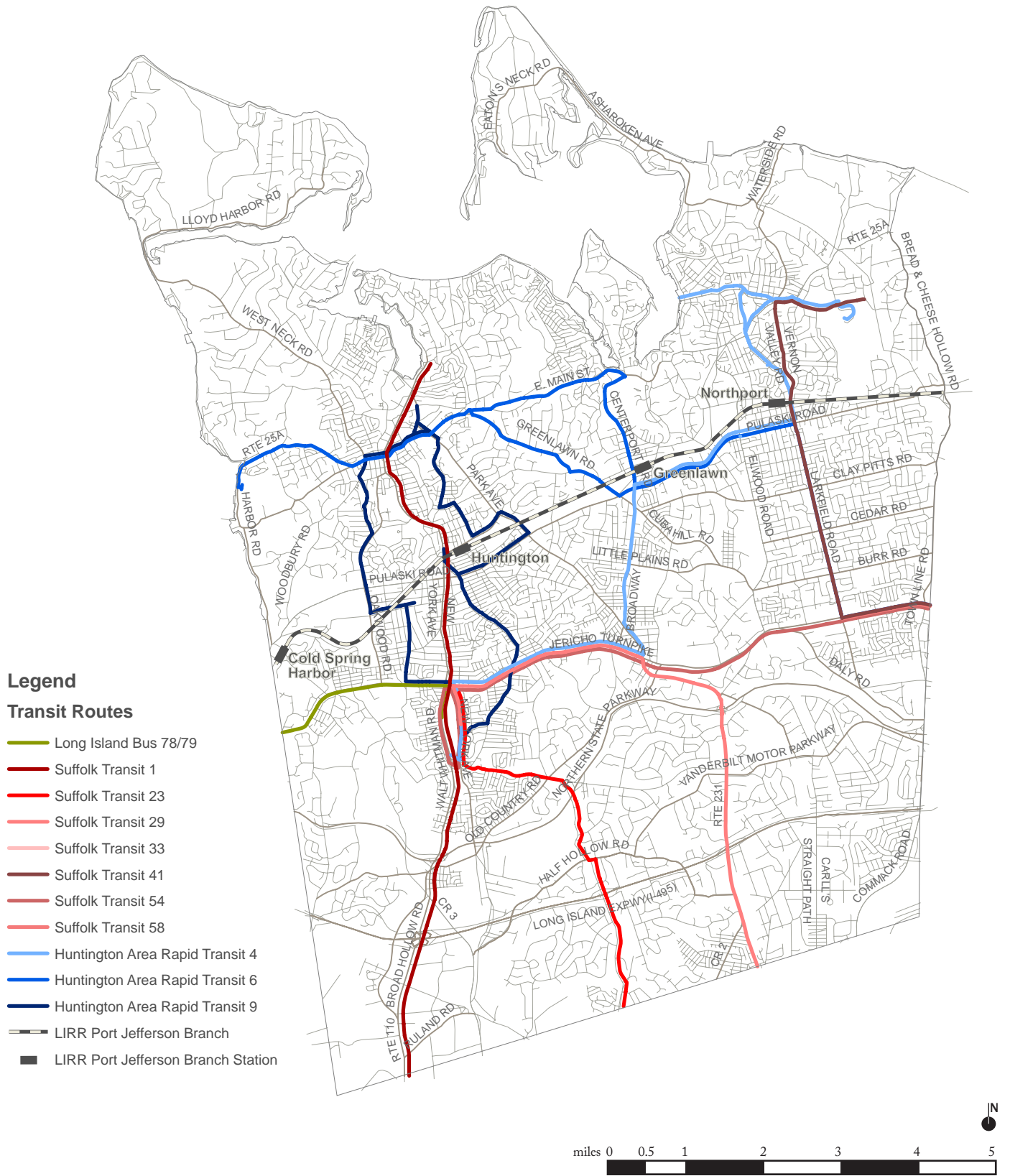
- Relieve traffic congestion and improve safety.
- Encourage land use patterns that reduce the need to use automobiles and encourage alternative modes of transportation.
- Improve transit service and increase opportunities for walking and bicycling.

² It has been estimated that a comprehensive system implemented townwide could reduce overall travel delays by 20 to 30 percent. Such a system would require a partnership among all jurisdictions and could cost in the range of \$10 to \$15 million.

³ Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) make use of modern technology to more effectively move automobiles and transit, and to communicate information to the traveling public. In addition to traffic signal coordination, examples of ITS applications include traffic monitoring and management, conveyance of real time information on traffic conditions to travelers, and “incident” (e.g., delays caused by accidents or construction activities) management.

⁴ Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies are designed to promote more efficient use of the existing transportation infrastructure as opposed to expanding capacity to meet demand. Examples of TDM strategies include high occupancy vehicle systems, ridesharing, park-and-ride facilities, staggered work hours, and telecommuting. Transportation Management Organizations, voluntary associations of public and private agencies and businesses, are frequently formed to cooperatively develop TDM strategies in congested communities.

Figure 8.4 Public Transportation



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

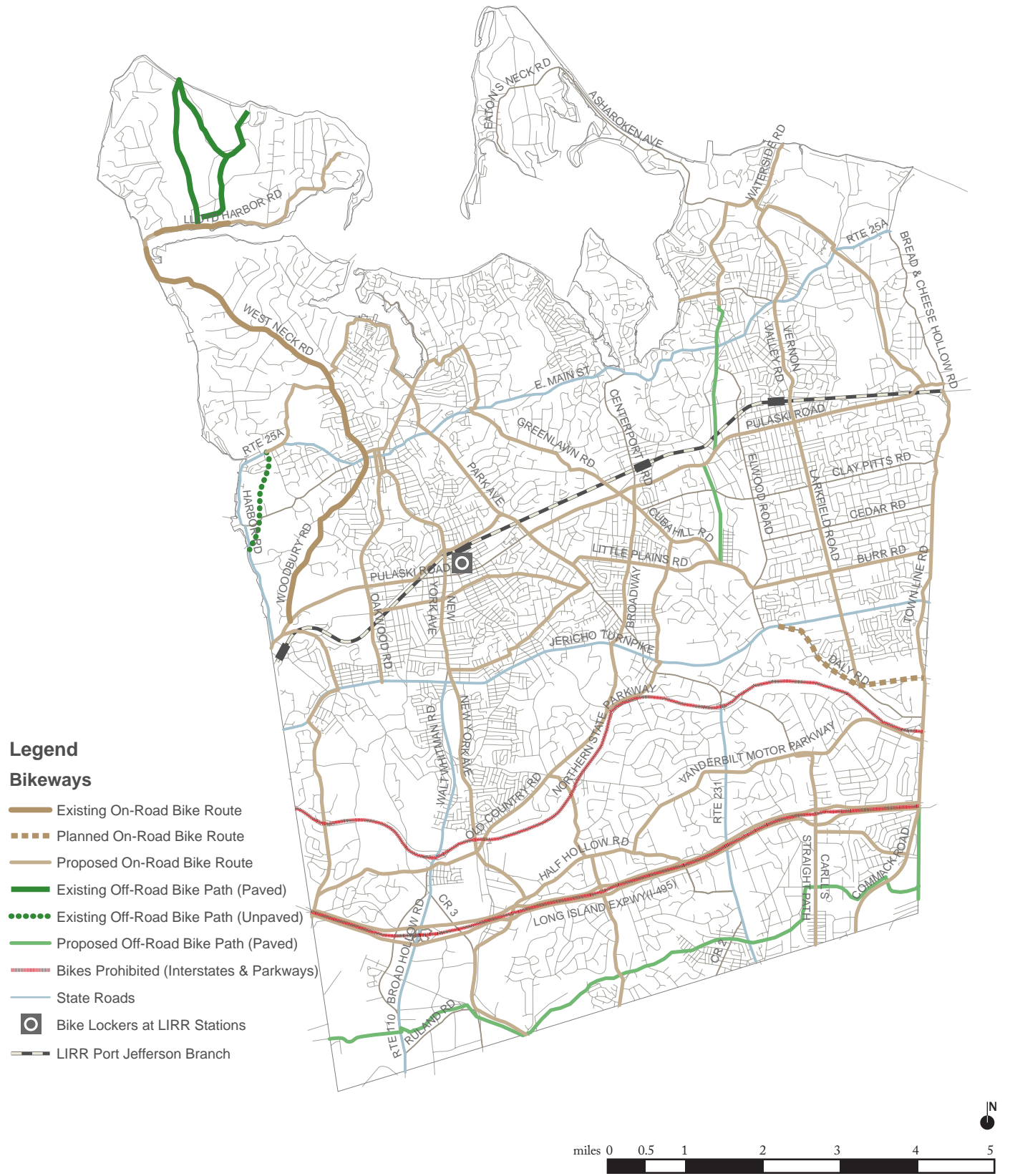
- Provide for parking needs in ways that maintain the economic competitiveness of commercial districts while maintaining and enhancing visual and environmental quality.
- Improve environmental quality through transportation strategies that reduce pollution and fossil fuel consumption.
- Develop town-wide pedestrian and bicycle networks, focusing on connections to key destinations such as schools, commercial centers, and other community facilities.
- Develop parking management plans and review parking standards to ensure that they match community needs.

Key recommendations include:

- Optimize the operational efficiency of the highway system (a Comprehensive Plan key initiative).
 - › Coordinate State, County and Town traffic signals as part of an integrated “Intelligent Transportation System”.
 - › Work cooperatively with New York State, Suffolk County, and neighboring municipalities to develop comprehensive solutions to transportation infrastructure improvements along shared corridors.
 - › Prepare a town-wide Unified Long Range Transportation Plan to prioritize and address congestion and safety “hot spots.”
 - › Consider a bond referendum and/or other funding source to support priority improvements to local roads.
 - › Increase coordination with the Suffolk County PD on highway safety planning.
 - › Work with transit providers and major employers to reduce peak time single-occupancy vehicle use.
 - › Use access management and land use patterns that reduce automobile travel.
- Work with HART, Suffolk County Transit, and LIRR to improve the attractiveness of public transit as an alternative to automobile use.
- Work with transportation providers and employers to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use through Transportation Demand Management.
- Integrate transportation and land use planning at the local level, including context-sensitive solutions and planning initiatives that promote balanced development patterns and transit-friendly development.⁵

⁵ A nationally emerging approach to transportation planning, “context-sensitive design” has been defined as a “collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility” (Project for Public Spaces).

Figure 8.5 Existing and Proposed Bikeways



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

8.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy F.1

Enhance the existing roadway network through targeted improvements and other measures to optimize operational efficiency.

Strategies

F.1.1 Participate in a joint planning task force with New York State, Suffolk County, and area municipalities to develop a regional approach to planning and coordinating transportation improvements in order to ensure the adequacy of shared roadway networks.

F.1.2 Work with NYSDOT and Suffolk County to coordinate traffic signals along congested roadways as part of an integrated, state-of-the-art Intelligent Transportation System.

F.1.3 Ensure future compatibility and networking capability of software applications and other traffic system components used by state, county and local transportation departments.

F.1.4 Preserve the investments made in existing roadways through resurfacing, drainage improvements focused on areas susceptible to flooding, and other actions needed to maintain them in adequate condition.

F.1.5 Develop a unified Long-Range Transportation Plan for the Town of Huntington to identify and program capital improvements to local, county and state roads needed to improve efficiency and to address congestion or safety “hot spots.”

F.1.6 In conjunction with the Long-Range Transportation Plan, enhance current state, county, and local programs to fund and implement improvements to identified “hot spots” (dedicated turn lanes, intersection capacity improvements, safety improvements, etc.). Support accelerated funding of regional improvements identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

F.1.7 Consider a bond referendum similar to the Environmental Open Space and Park Fund and/or other funding source to support priority improvements to local roads.

F.1.8 Increase coordination with the Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) in roadway planning and programming.

- More frequent accident data updates for use in re-evaluating and prioritizing planned safety improvements.
- Consultations with SCPD in the planning and implementation of roadway safety improvement projects.

F.1.9 Work with transportation providers and major employers to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use during peak hours through Transportation Demand Management, e.g.:

- Incentives/employee subsidies to encourage employee ridesharing, transit use, etc.
- Incentives for increased use of telecommuting and flexible work hours.
- Public education and awareness programs regarding the availability and benefits of alternatives to automobile commuting.
- Use transportation management organizations to promote and coordinate transportation demand management strategies.

Policy F.2

Coordinate land use and transportation planning and implementation.

Strategies

F.2.1 Promote land use patterns that reduce automobile usage (e.g., compact, walkable mixed-use nodes rather than linear (“strip”) commercial development along highway corridors).

F.2.2 Manage access along arterial roadways to reduce congestion and increase safety, e.g.:

- Consolidate/limit individual driveways and intersections.
- Encourage shared curb cuts, connections within and between adjacent developments/ parking lots, and service drives.
- Construct medians and other devices to control turning movements.
- Replace on-street with off-street parking where feasible along roadways such as New York Avenue in Huntington Station.

F.2.3 Require developments exceeding designated thresholds to conduct traffic impact studies and identify mitigation measures to supplement the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process.

F.2.4 Explore the use of an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance or developer contributions to fund transportation improvements needed to support new development.

F.2.5 Reduce the impacts of vehicular traffic on Huntington’s neighborhoods and village centers caused by congestion on state, county, and local arterial roadways.

- Develop a program to address neighborhood cut-through traffic, including traffic calming where appropriate in specific locations.
- Ensure that any proposed transportation improvements are sensitive to neighborhood or hamlet character through use of a context-sensitive design process.⁶

F.2.6 Address transportation issues in the Melville area through an integrated land use/ transportation study (see Land Use Strategy D.2.1).

Policy F.3

Enhance bus transit service and Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) ridership.

Strategies

F.3.1 Work with HART and Suffolk County Transit Services to make bus service a more attractive and usable travel option, e.g.:

- Improve service coverage, speed and frequency.
- Extend hours of service and include weekend service where possible.
- Serve key destinations such as commercial centers, community facilities, and employment areas.

⁶ A nationally emerging approach to transportation planning, “context-sensitive design” has been defined as a “collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility” (Project for Public Spaces).

- Explore flexible, demand-responsive services using smaller vehicles to supplement traditional fixed routes.
- Improve the efficiency and attractiveness of bus transit facilities (bus pull-outs, passenger waiting shelters, signage, etc.).
- Explore the feasibility of developing Bus Rapid Transit Service to serve the Route 110 corridor.⁷

F.3.2 Support the complete electrification of the Port Jefferson branch line of the LIRR and increase the frequency of trains east of Huntington.

F.3.3 Work with LIRR to improve the attractiveness of stations for users (more attractive facilities, adequate and convenient parking, pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods, mixed-use development, etc.).

F.3.4 Ensure that transit facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities or special needs.

F.3.5 Promote transit use as part of a Transportation Demand Management strategy (see Transportation Strategy F.1.9).

Policy F.4

Improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities, linkages, and usage throughout Huntington.

Strategies

F.4.1 Develop a town-wide pedestrian network, focusing on establishment of connections to key destinations such as commercial centers and corridors, transit stops, schools, and other community facilities. Measure the effectiveness of the network based on five factors:

- **Directness:** Does the network provide the shortest possible route to the destination?
- **Continuity:** Is the network free from gaps and barriers?
- **Street Crossings:** Can the pedestrian safely cross streets?
- **Visual Interest and Amenities:** Is the environment attractive and comfortable?
- **Security:** Is the environment secure and well lighted with a good line of sight to see the pedestrian?

F.4.2 Implement a town-wide bikeway system, including both on-street lanes and off-street multi-use paths.

F.4.3 Coordinate the design and construction of state, county and local roadway improvement projects to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, adequate lighting and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant features.

⁷ Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a flexible, rubber-tired form of rapid transit that combines stations, vehicles, services, running ways, and ITS elements into an integrated system with a strong identity. BRT applications are designed to be appropriate to the market they serve and their physical surroundings, and they can be incrementally implemented in a variety of environments (from dedicated rights-of-way to mixed-traffic on streets and highways). In many respects, BRT is a rubber-tired light rail transit (LRT) but with greater operating flexibility and potentially lower costs. Often, a relatively small investment in dedicated guideways can provide regional rapid transit. (Transportation Research Board)

Policy F.5

Provide for public and private parking that is adequate to meet needs and is compatible with established community character.

Strategies

F.5.1 Develop parking management plans for Huntington Village and other areas with public parking needs.

- Based upon the results of the parking management plan, consider well-designed parking deck compatible with village character in Huntington Village.
- Consider off-street municipal parking along New York Avenue in Huntington Station.
- Encourage parking behind buildings and interconnections between parking lots on adjacent properties.

F.5.2 Review off-street parking standards to ensure that they match needs, including consideration of the following approaches:

- Use of maximum as well as minimum parking requirements.
- Credits for shared and/or off-site parking.
- Substitution of fees “in lieu of” on-site parking, to be used for development of public parking in areas with constraints on private parking.

F.5.3 Review and improve regulatory standards for parking lot design and landscaping.

Policy F.6

Improve environmental quality through transportation strategies that reduce automobile and fossil fuel usage.

Strategies

F.6.1 Promote transit, walking, and biking as alternatives to automobile use (see Transportation Policies F.3 and F.4).

F.6.2 Promote compact, mixed-use development patterns that reduce the need to drive (see Transportation Strategy F.2.1).

F.6.3 Encourage the use of alternative fuel vehicles and incorporate them into the Town’s fleet.

F.6.4 Establish standards to reduce the environmental impacts of parking lots (improved landscaping requirements, sustainable stormwater solutions such as pervious pavement, etc).

9

housing

9.1 Overview

9.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

9.3 Policies and Strategies

Goal

1. **Provide a variety of housing choices that are suitable and affordable for Huntington's diverse households and compatible with the character of Huntington's neighborhoods.**

9.1 Overview



No factor directly impacts the quality of life of a community as much as the quality and cost of its housing and the livability of its neighborhoods. Huntington's existing housing stock and stable, attractive neighborhoods are key to the high quality of life that residents currently enjoy. However, some critical housing issues, including affordability and the increasing demand for diverse housing types to serve a changing population, need to be addressed if our high quality of life is to be maintained in the future.¹

The issue of housing cost and affordability is the principal housing-related challenge facing Huntington. The estimated median value of housing in 2007 was \$631,188², a 127% increase over the 2000 median of \$277,900 reported by the U.S. Census. Available data indicates that the price of housing moderated between 2007 and 2008 (<http://realestate.yahoo.com>). Nevertheless, the high cost of housing remains unaffordable for many middle-income families and prohibitively expensive for first-time buyers. Moreover, the affordability "gap" is magnified when the combination of housing prices, home energy costs, and property taxes is compared to household incomes. (Median household incomes rose from \$82,528 in 2000 (U.S. Census) to an estimated \$119,218 in 2007², or 44%.) Higher housing prices in turn translate to higher

taxes, higher costs of services, and a higher cost of living in general. More than a quality of life issue, this situation impacts Huntington's (and the region's) long-term economic viability, as communities where housing and living costs are beyond the means of most in the workforce will find it difficult to compete for new employment and investment. Companies simply will not choose to locate in a community if their employees cannot afford to live there.

Except for the affluent and those with substantial equity in an existing home, all segments of the population are affected by the scarcity of affordable housing in Huntington. According to the U.S. Census, the number of households with incomes below the poverty line increased by 33% between 1990 and 2000, to 4.2% of the total population. Approximately 66% of these households were located in Huntington Station, Huntington, Greenlawn, and East Northport, with the largest concentration in Huntington Station. Moreover, there is anecdotal evidence that the Town's ethnic groups – in particular Hispanics, who make up a significant proportion of the lower income population – were underrepresented in the 2000 Census. Rental housing options for Huntington's lower income residents are limited. The 2000 U.S. Census reported that rental units accounted for only 15% of the Town's overall housing stock and the median rent was \$924. While more recent figures for Huntington are not available, "fair market rents" for existing housing compiled in 2007 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for Nassau and Suffolk Counties as a whole ranged from \$994 for a studio apartment to \$1,961 for a four-bedroom unit, indicating significant cost escalation. The shortage of affordable housing

options means that lower income residents are too often forced to occupy illegally converted, overcrowded and/or substandard homes, creating a destabilizing influence in older, traditionally affordable neighborhoods.

For moderate and middle income members of the local workforce, such as nurses, police officers, secretaries, and mid-level managers, choices for quality, affordable rental housing are similarly limited. Huntington's 15%/85% split of rental vs. homeownership housing is much more pronounced than the 33%/67% split for the U.S. as a whole and falls short of providing a balance or range of choices for those with different housing needs. The market prices of homes for sale are, simply stated, unaffordable; in general, most first-time prospective home buyers are priced out of the market. The more prosperous among Huntington's households are also affected as family members of the younger generation, even those with good jobs, find it impossible to afford a home comparable to the one they grew up in. The result is that many young people are moving out of Huntington and Long Island as a whole. According to the U.S. Census, the number of residents between 25 and 29 years old declined by 36% between 1990 and 2000 while the number between 30 and 34 years old declined by 9%. This trend has continued since 2000 as the cost of housing has escalated.

The need for housing that working families and individuals can afford was addressed in a 2005 report by the Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission. The Commission made a series of action recommendations, such as identifying potential housing and mixed-use sites, updating and improving the County's Affordable Housing Program, streamlining the

¹ More detailed information on demographic and housing trends in the Town of Huntington is provided in *Demographic and Economic Analysis for Town of Huntington Comprehensive Plan Update*, April 2004, prepared by Economics Research Associates.

² Source: Money Magazine Best Places to Live, 2007. The Suffolk County Planning Commission median household income estimate for 2006, derived by adjusting the 2000 U.S. Census figure based on annual changes to the Consumer Price Index, was lower at \$102,904.

lengthy and expensive permitting process, and making sewer and wastewater improvements to address environmental and infrastructure constraints on workforce housing. In addition, the Commission proposed state legislation that would provide funds for school districts that accept workforce housing developments.

Related to housing cost and affordability is the issue of the diversity of the housing stock. Huntington's present residential development pattern consists overwhelmingly of detached single-family housing. Lower density residential districts (R-80, R-40, R-20, and R-15) account for approximately 74% of all residentially-zoned land in Huntington. Higher density districts (R-10, R-7, and R-5) account for approximately 25% of the Town's residentially zoned land. Of these, the R-5 district permits two-family in addition to single-family dwellings under certain conditions while the R-7 and R-10 permit only single-family dwellings. Multi-family and specialized housing districts account for approximately 1% of all residentially zoned land in the Town. In addition, there are some examples of mixed-use development (dwellings above first-floor retail stores) in traditional centers such as Huntington Village and East Northport.

The predominantly detached, single-family pattern of residential development is highly

valued by residents and is central to Huntington's community identity. There was a time in the Town's history when this pattern met the needs of most Huntington households, which typically consisted of a traditional two-parent family with children, often with two or more generations of the same family residing in the same large home. In recent decades, however, Huntington (like the rest of the nation) has seen significant demographic shifts toward smaller, "non-traditional" households, including empty nesters and retirees, singles, couples without children, and single-parent households, as well as a variety of special-needs households. In particular, persons aged 65 and over are a rapidly growing segment of the population that will continue to increase as "baby boomers" reach retirement age and young people continue to leave the Town. Because Huntington's present housing stock does not reflect the needs of non-traditional households, there is a pressing need for diverse housing types to serve a changing population. This issue is further complicated because it occurs when Huntington is approaching build-out with limited opportunities for new "greenfield" development.

An appropriate response to these issues is to identify redevelopment and infill³ opportunities to meet housing needs, including suitable close-in locations for smaller dwellings built at higher densities to achieve economy of

scale and affordability. This approach has the added benefit of satisfying the desire of many such households to live in a walkable, less automobile-reliant community. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan policies and strategies for both land use and housing call for mixed-use development and higher density in locations where meeting new housing needs can be a stabilizing influence on deteriorating neighborhoods or economic obsolescence necessitates significant redevelopment. These locations should be dispersed throughout the Town in as many suitable locations as possible. At the same time, the character of stable, lower-density, single-family neighborhoods must be maintained.

This recommendation is not a new one for the Town. The 1993 Comprehensive Plan Housing Element emphasized the need for diversification of the housing stock, including affordable, multi-family units and mixed-use development. The plan set as a goal that 20% of all new housing units constructed be affordable to low and moderate income households, and created a strategy for locating such development:

Whether included within a mixed-use project or separately developed, higher-density residential development (10+ units per acre) and nursing homes, garden apartments and other more intensive



³ Infill refers to a type of development that takes place in established, previously developed areas of the community. It can occur on vacant lots between existing uses, on pieces of land with dilapidated buildings, or can involve changing a property from a less to a more intensive land use (e.g., from a parking lot to a building).

housing design types should be located, wherever possible, to serve as a transitional use between nonresidential (commercial and industrial uses) and low-density residential development. In keeping with this concept, land for higher-density residential development should be sought where existing commercial/industrial zoned land interfaces with existing residential lands, and rezoning commercial and industrial parcels rather than re-designating lower density residential areas for such uses. The logic behind this is that parcels currently zoned for commercial and industrial uses are more allied with and better suited to accommodate the potential image, traffic and environmental impacts associated with higher-density residential land uses than parcels zoned for single-family development. (p. 4-25)

Subsequent to the 1993 Comprehensive Plan the Town enacted a requirement that at least 20% of units in applicant-initiated zone changes involving 10 or more units and an increase in density be affordable. While this requirement has resulted in affordable housing as part of several larger scale developments, future opportunities are limited by the scarcity of suitable undeveloped land. Ways to strengthen the existing regulations should be explored, including extension of the requirement to rezonings involving less than 10 units.

In accordance with requirements for funding set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Town maintains a Consolidated Plan that defines priorities to address affordable housing and other community needs. These priorities guide the use by the Huntington Commu-

nity Development Agency (HCDA) of approximately \$1.3 million received from HUD each year to serve low and moderate-income and special-needs residents. The HCDA has a major Home Improvement Program designed to bring owner-occupied homes up to code, improving living conditions and quality of life for residents. Other town initiatives to address substandard housing include the Housing Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) and the "Take Back The Block" Program. HEAT focuses enforcement activities by the Town's Department of Public Safety on illegal and unsafe housing. The Take Back the Blocks program is an affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization strategy designed to transform deteriorated properties primarily owned by absentee landlords into aesthetically pleasing, owner-occupied, affordable homes with safe rental units that will help meet mortgage obligations.

In addition to the HCDA, several organizations are active in housing issues in Huntington. The Huntington Housing Authority owns and manages the Gateway Gardens and Millennium Hills public housing complexes and administers the Section 8 rental assistance program for low income residents. The Family Service League is a private nonprofit that works closely with the Town on homeless assistance and prevention. Housing Help



performs extensive foreclosure counseling and is developing Matinecock Court, an affordable housing complex in East Northport. Housing Help is also partnering with the Town on new home construction as part of the Take Back the Blocks program. Other nonprofit housing organizations in the Town include Paumanack Village, which administers and develops senior rentals, and Whitman Village, which manages cooperatives for low and moderate income residents.

One potential impediment to the much-needed diversification of Huntington's housing stock is the perception that any effort to expand housing opportunities will inevitably boost school enrollments to a greater extent than other types of housing. Concerns regarding school district impacts are important and should be subject to factual analysis, given relatively flat population/enrollment projections reported in some school districts. Nevertheless, for the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan schools are one of a number of types of community facilities and uses that a healthy community requires to maintain its vitality. Meeting the legitimate need to adequately house all of Huntington's citizens, regardless of age, occupation, and circumstance, is a critical planning issue today and will continue to be so in the future as it has been in past plans.



9.2 Key Issues, Objectives, and Recommendations

Based on the above discussion, key housing issues in the Town of Huntington include:

- Escalating housing costs are a major issue that impacts a broad spectrum of Huntington's population. Many of the Town's homeowners could not afford to purchase the home they live in at today's prices. There is also a scarcity of decent, affordable rental housing in the Town. This issue must be addressed if Huntington is to remain a viable community in the future.
- The shortage of decent affordable housing has resulted in the proliferation of illegal, overcrowded, and substandard housing, particularly in areas with higher concentrations of persons living in poverty.
- Huntington's predominantly single-family housing stock is not well suited to the needs of a demographically changing population that includes an increasing proportion of seniors, empty nesters, singles, and other non-traditional households. Projections by the Suffolk County Department of Planning indicate a demand for approximately 3,500 new housing units in Huntington between 2005 and 2030. Smaller units in more compact settings will be needed to meet the housing needs of a diversifying population.
- While the need for affordable housing is undeniable, there is considerable concern regarding the potential impacts of school-aged children generated by such development on school district costs and resulting property taxes. As a result, much of the recent higher density development in Huntington has been in the form of senior housing, which does not impact schools and as noted serves a growing population within the Town. However, Huntington's future viability as

a community depends on finding ways to retain middle class workers and families who raise their children in the Town.

Addressing these issues is a priority Comprehensive Plan initiative with two primary, interrelated objectives:

- Provide a more diverse housing stock with decent housing opportunities available to all income groups and household types.
- Eliminate existing substandard, overcrowded, and illegal housing.

Key recommendations to achieve these objectives include:

- Pursue a multi-pronged approach to reducing and eliminating illegal housing.
 - › Increase code enforcement.
 - › Expand the Town's Take Back The Block Program.
 - › Improve the flexibility of the Accessory Apartment regulations to facilitate the provision of legal units.
 - › Ensure that all persons displaced from illegal housing units are provided adequate replacement housing.
- Pursue a broad-based strategy to increase Huntington's supply of workforce housing.
 - › Strengthen requirements for workforce housing as a condition of zone changes.
 - › Utilize apartments in village districts and mixed-use redevelopment to replace obsolescent commercial development.
 - › Implement strong quality construction and "green" construction guidelines.

- › Undertake public education on the benefits of workforce housing.
- › Designate a Town workforce housing coordinator.
- › Give workforce housing preference to Town/School District residents.

- Promote a more diverse housing stock through the development of smaller dwelling units in compact, mixed-use settings while protecting existing single-family neighborhoods
- Provide for the housing needs of low income, moderate income, and special needs populations based on guidelines established through demographic analysis
- Promote energy conservation measures in affordable/workforce housing to reduce household costs and contribute to a Sustainable Huntington initiative
- Address the potential impacts of new housing developments on schools based on accurate data regarding future enrollments and the number of school age children that will be generated by the development
- Support efforts at the state level to provide supplemental financial aid for school districts that accept workforce housing developments

Consistent with the fundamental planning principles guiding the Comprehensive Plan, efforts to provide a more diverse, affordable housing stock should focus on replacing and improving undesirable or obsolescent land uses, leaving stable existing neighborhoods intact. Steps should also be taken to assure equitable distribution of housing types throughout the Town and its school districts.

9.3 Policies and Strategies

Policy G.1

Eliminate substandard, overcrowded, and illegally converted housing, strengthen the livability of impacted neighborhoods, and ensure a supply of legal replacement housing for those displaced by enforcement activities.

Strategies

G.1.1 Increase the efforts of Huntington's Housing Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) to identify and eliminate illegal, unsafe housing units, including more severe penalties for violations.

G.1.2 Increase efforts under the Take Back The Block Program to rehabilitate and transform substandard, absentee landlord rental dwellings into quality, owner-occupied housing units in all affected areas of the Town.

G.1.3 Enhance the Accessory Apartment program to exercise greater control through licensing and inspection while increasing the supply of legal apartments available in owner-occupied homes or homes owned by non-profit housing organizations.

G.1.4 Assist persons displaced from illegal housing units in securing replacement housing, including assistance from non-governmental and non-profit entities.

Policy G.2

Address the need for workforce housing.⁴

Strategies

G.2.1 Strengthen current regulations requiring affordable housing in rezonings that involve an increase in permitted density over existing zoning, including application to developments with fewer than ten units.

G.2.2 Identify opportunities to provide workforce and alternative housing in appropriate locations compatible with existing neighborhoods, schools and community facilities and sensitive environmental resources. Ensure equitable townwide distribution. Examples of possible approaches include:

- Second-story apartments above stores in village districts.
- Residential/mixed-use development with a workforce housing component along commercial corridors (e.g., along Jericho Turnpike) as a replacement for marginal or obsolescent commercial uses.
- Use of Transfer of Density Flow Rights both to provide workforce housing and as a tool to preserve additional open space by restoring the density permitted by existing zoning on properties affected by the Suffolk County Sanitary Code.⁵
- Partnerships with nonprofit housing organizations and for-profit developers to provide workforce housing (land write-downs, streamlined development processes in coordination with Suffolk County, grants and incentives, community land trusts, etc.).
- Consideration of incentives to promote the development of workforce housing (e.g., density bonuses, streamlined development processes, variations in parking/ infrastructure requirements).
- Reservation or extension of public sewer capacity for developments that provide workforce housing.

⁴ The Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission's definition of workforce housing is homes available to families earning no more than 120% of the area median income, a minimum of 50% of which must be available to families earning no more than 80% of the area median income.

⁵ The Suffolk County Sanitary Code requires lots with on-site sewage disposal systems to be 20,000 square feet or greater within designated "Hydrological Management Zones" even if they are zoned for higher density by the Town of Huntington (e.g., minimum 15,000 square foot lots in the R-15 zone, minimum 10,000 square foot lots in the R-10 zone, etc.). A Transfer of Density Flow Rights Program would restore the density allowed by the current zoning for the property by transferring development rights from other properties to be preserved as open space.

G.2.3 Implement guidelines to ensure the quality of workforce housing (livable community design, quality construction, energy efficiency, etc.).

G.2.4 Promote energy conservation measures in workforce housing to reduce household costs and contribute to a Sustainable Huntington initiative.

G.2.5 Promote affordable ownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers through assistance programs.

G.2.6 Enforce provisions to ensure that the affordability of dedicated workforce housing is maintained in the future.

G.2.7 Initiate a public education program regarding the need for, benefits and impacts of workforce housing, including a database linked to the Town of Huntington website.

G.2.8 Give preference to persons living or working in Huntington and potential for school district preferences in considering workforce housing applications.

G.2.9 Designate an Affordable Housing Coordinator within town government as a point person to provide information to developers, property owners, and other citizens regarding requirements and options for workforce housing.

Policy G.3

Promote the diversification of housing stock to meet the changing demographics of Huntington's population.

Strategies

G.3.1 Consistent with the Principles of Smart Growth and Livability approved by the Town Board⁶, permit development of smaller dwelling units in compact, mixed-use settings that will not adversely impact stable neighborhoods, e.g.:

- Apartments over stores or small-scale infill developments in village districts or along smaller-scale commercial corridors, if compatible with the established scale and character of the surroundings.
- Attached residential/mixed use developments to replace marginal or obsolescent uses along larger-scale commercial corridors (e.g., Jericho Turnpike).
- Consideration of non-permanent housing (short-term housing, extended stay hotels, etc.) with stringent standards.

G.3.2 Implement thresholds and standards for the location and design of higher density housing to ensure compatibility with adjacent established land uses and minimize or avoid impacts on traffic, neighborhoods, school districts, and sensitive environmental resources.

⁶ The Principles of Smart Growth and Livability were formulated by the Huntington Smart Growth Steering Committee and accepted in a resolution by Town Board in October 1999. They promote attractive, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development and a diversity of housing types to serve the needs of citizens from a wide range of age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and economic levels.

Policy G.4

Provide for the housing needs of low income and special needs populations.

Strategies

G.4.1 Per the priorities set by the Town of Huntington Consolidated Plan, continue to target funding received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and other resources to address the housing needs of low-income (earning 0% to 80% of median income), homeless, and special needs (e.g., persons with mental or physical disabilities) populations.

G.4.2 Implement code requirements to promote the physical accessibility of housing to persons with disabilities.

G.4.3 Promote energy conservation measures in low income and special needs housing to reduce household costs and contribute to a Sustainable Huntington initiative.

G.4.4 Support the efforts of non-profit housing providers.

G.4.5 Set guidelines to meet needs for low and moderate income housing based on demographic analysis.

Policy G.5

Address the potential impacts of new housing developments on schools (see Community Facilities Policy C.2).

Strategies

G.5.1 Develop sound data on the number of school age children generated by different types of housing developments to measure their impacts on school districts.

G.5.2 Prepare accurate projections of future school enrollments based on the anticipated household occupancies of existing and future housing stock.

G.5.3 As recommended by the Suffolk County Workforce Housing Commission, support state legislation that would provide a formula for supplemental financial aid for school districts with workforce housing development sites while ensuring that other state school aid programs are maintained at full funding (see Community Facilities Policy C.2.2).

G.5.4 Explore other ways to address the impacts of new residential developments on schools (e.g., developer contributions such as dedication of school sites, Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, etc.).

G.5.5 Address impacts of new housing developments on schools through the Town/School District Coordinating Council (see Community Facilities Strategy C.1.1).

10

geographic focal areas

10.1 Overview

10.2 Hamlet Centers

10.3 Commercial Centers and Corridors



10.1 Overview

The greatest potential for change in the Town of Huntington exists in specific portions of the Town referred to in the Comprehensive Plan as geographic focal areas. These areas are composed primarily of commercial and mixed uses that tend to be affected by changing consumer preferences and market conditions. Therefore, they are more susceptible to change than single-family residential neighborhoods, which make up the largest land use group in the Town. Geographic focal areas include:

Hamlet/Unincorporated Village Centers

- Cold Spring Harbor
- East Northport
- Greenlawn
- Huntington Station
- Huntington Village

Commercial Centers and Corridors

- Melville Employment Center
- Jericho Turnpike
- Route 110 (Jericho Turnpike to Melville)
- Minor commercial corridors

The general locations of these areas are shown in Figure 10.1.

This chapter analyzes the existing conditions, issues, and opportunities associated with the above geographic focal areas in greater detail. Based on the analysis, a goal or goals are identified for each focal area, supported by recommended strategies to achieve the goals. These strategies represent more specific applications

of the town-wide strategies proposed in the land use and other comprehensive plan elements. They are grouped into implementation “themes” or topics, such as zoning, physical improvements, mobility and parking, and sewer service.

Zoning

One zoning issue cuts across the Town’s geographic focal areas: most of the land in these areas is zoned C-6 General Business, a classification that allows for a wide variety of uses and contains very few restrictions on the size and design of lots and buildings. Because the permitted land uses and design controls under the C-6 zoning are so open, they are often incompatible with Comprehensive Plan goals such as maintaining the character of established hamlet centers. Therefore, a priority recommendation is to create a new hamlet center zoning district(s) tailored to the characteristics of Huntington’s traditional centers to replace the existing C-6 zoning. Adjustments to the existing C-6 zoning are also proposed along many of Huntington’s commercial corridors.

Another recurring issue relates to industrial zoning. The amount of industrially zoned for land in the Town of Huntington has diminished over the years as manufacturing has declined and land values have increased for other uses. Today, “heavy commercial” businesses that play an essential role in Huntington’s economy have difficulty finding adequate properties in the Town. Much of the remaining industrially-zoned land is located either the Melville Employment Center or along railroad corridors in areas such as Huntington Station. It is important to retain existing industrial properties and to zone for

new industrial land where practical. In addition, the Town’s industrial zoning classifications should be upgraded to include stricter standards for landscaping and buffering to protect adjacent uses.

Physical Improvements

Because the geographic focal areas are located along Huntington’s most heavily traveled roadway corridors and are places to which residents go for shopping and entertainment activities, they are extremely important to the Town’s image and quality of life. Therefore, physical investments to enhance visual character and improve infrastructure are key recommendations for these areas. Potential visual improvements include landscaping, signage, streetscape and gateway enhancements, and façade improvements. Infrastructure improvements range from initiatives to place utilities underground to stormwater management projects and “Sustainable Huntington” initiatives such as tree plantings.

Mobility and Parking

Mobility and parking needs associated with geographic focal areas vary widely. Some areas, such as Greenlawn, require few improvements. In others, such as Melville, traffic congestion is a key determinant of carry capacity. Recommendations for commercial corridors include traffic enhancements, access management, and evaluation of parking requirements. Approaches such as parking and traffic management systems are proposed for larger centers such as Huntington Village and Melville. In addition to addressing traffic and parking, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements are recommended in a number of geographic focal areas.

10.2 Hamlet Centers

Sewer Service

The lack of public sewer service represents a constraint on redevelopment in hamlet centers such as Cold Spring Harbor and Greenlawn. While this constraint helps maintain the traditional character of these centers, it also precludes certain uses that could enhance economic vitality or meet Comprehensive Plan objectives. Designation of hamlet centers as receiving areas for a Transfer of Density Flow Rights Program is recommended where appropriate to local conditions. This program would preserve open space outside of the hamlet center without resulting in a net increase in zoning density (see Environmental Resources and Open Space Strategy A.9.2). Conversely, where public sewer service is available (primarily the Huntington Sewer District) capacity should be carefully planned and allocated to support Comprehensive Plan objectives.

10.2.1 Cold Spring Harbor

Cold Spring Harbor was one of the original settlements in the Town of Huntington. Originally a small whaling port, the hamlet retains much of its historic charm and vernacular architecture. Most of the hamlet is located in a designated historic district, which houses a number of antique dealers and other tourism-related retail establishments but few services that are oriented to nearby residents.

Cold Spring’s physical pattern places several constraints on growth and change. These constraints relate to parking, wastewater treatment, and new development. The municipal parking lot on Main Street was recently expanded and parking is allowed on one side of Main Street. A limited amount of overflow parking is available on Spring Street, a residential street behind Main Street.

The lack of public sewer combined with small lot sizes and a high groundwater table make it difficult to install new septic systems in Cold Spring Harbor. Because of this restriction there is a limited number of restaurants in the district and few of the retail stores have public restrooms. It is unlikely that any new restaurants will be permitted because of these constraints.

The hamlet center is located in a valley that descends toward the harbor. Adjacent residential

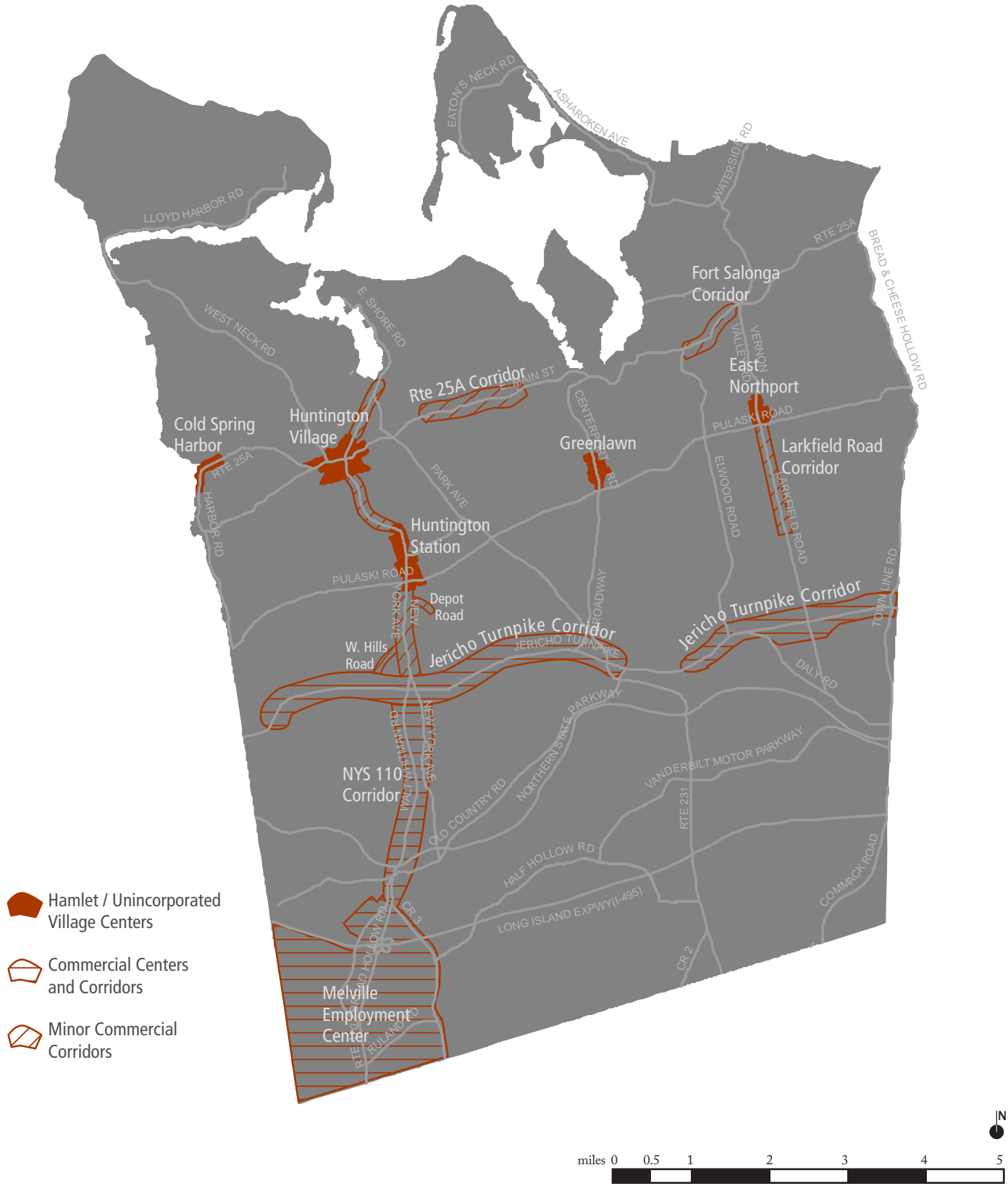
properties, steep slopes, and the harbor itself physically limit the amount of new development that can occur. Additionally, the historic district designation of Cold Spring Harbor is a regulatory constraint on new development.

Currently, the Main Street area of Cold Spring Harbor is zoned C-6 General Business. There are a number of reasons why C-6 zoning is an improper fit for this area. Its permissive requirements are geared to automobile-oriented uses and only limit the height of buildings, not their area or bulk. Additionally, there are no streetscape façade guidelines, which is an important issue in historic Cold Spring Harbor. The lack of setbacks and side yard requirements is a fire safety issue in a district with centuries-old wooden buildings. Therefore, a new hamlet center zoning district should be developed to replace the existing C-6 zoning along Main Street, potentially extending to Spring Street as well.

Appropriate visual improvements should be considered at neighborhood gateway entrances to Cold Spring Harbor. The gas station at the top of the hill across from Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories is one potential location. Near the harbor, a new, small-scale visitors center with a public restroom could be considered as part of a western gateway.



Figure 10.1 Geographic Focal Areas



Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Goal:

Maintain Cold Spring Harbor's historic character and function as a small scale visitor destination.

Strategies

- 1. Zoning:** Change the existing C-6 zone to a new "Hamlet Center" zoning district with the following provisions:
 - Restrict automobile-oriented uses (now permitted as a conditional use).
 - Maintain provisions allowing upper story residential above retail.
 - Allow existing office space to remain as a permitted use.
 - Require retail uses on ground floor along Main Street.
 - Prohibit visible parking under buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade).
 - Consider extending the Hamlet Center zone to Spring Street/allow single-family residences as a permitted use to eliminate nonconforming zoning.
 - Require conditional use permits for buildings above 3,000 square feet (GFA) in size.
 - Eliminate depth extensions.
 - Establish a two-story height limit.
 - Establish contextual setback/build-to lines, taking into consideration fire safety issues.
 - Create a basic design vocabulary/architectural standards for massing and façade treatments that are appropriate for the hamlet zone.

- Establish other design standards to complement hamlet character (e.g., signage).

2. Physical Improvements: Consider selected improvements to enhance village character and support Cold Spring Harbor's role as a small-scale visitor destination, including:

- Landscaping and signage improvements at gateways to Main Street.
- Removal of overhead utility lines along Main Street as feasible.
- Possible welcome center in conjunction with post office.
- Additional public parking that maintains the historic built fabric.
- Street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a "Green/Sustainable Huntington" initiative.

10.2.2 East Northport

The East Northport hamlet center consists of retail and community services located at the northern end of Larkfield Road near the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) station. This area developed originally as a railroad hub and center of commerce in the eastern half of the Town of Huntington.



Most of the structures along Larkfield Road in the heart of the hamlet center are one and two-story buildings from the early 20th Century with commercial uses at street level and either office or residential space above. Examples of businesses in this retail area include a traditional hardware store, fitness club, and neighborhood bar. However, the area is characterized by a number of vacancies and sub-standard apartments. The local Chamber of Commerce has been very active and is pursuing streetscape enhancements.

Further north and south of the LIRR tracks, the commercial district is characterized by low-rise, mid to late 20th century retail buildings and a mix of community facilities and institutional uses, including churches, parks, a library, and a fire station. A number of auto service centers and gas stations are also located in this area. Commuter and retail parking lots abut the LIRR tracks to the west of Larkfield Road and a mix of parking, residential and industrial uses lines the tracks to the east. Single-family residential districts immediately surround the central commercial area.

Parking is a major issue in East Northport for retail customers and commuters. Many of the commercial uses along Larkfield Road have no dedicated parking or share spaces with other businesses. Adding to this problem, LIRR commuters often park in lots that are intended for retail uses, potentially reducing the revenue potential of retail businesses.

The MTA has proposed to extend electrified service to the end of the Port Jefferson Branch, which would lead to an increased amount of rail service through East Northport. If and when this electrification occurs, it is likely that even more commuters would use the East Northport station, exacerbating the

current parking issues. In anticipation of this development, it may be necessary to consider potential solutions such as parking decks and shared parking. The MTA prepared a parking plan several years ago, which should be updated. A parking management plan for East Northport should be developed regardless of whether this portion of the line is electrified.

Traffic is a significant issue in East Northport, particularly along Larkfield Road. Traffic becomes especially congested at the northern end of the village at the irregular, five-way intersection of Larkfield Road with Bellerose Avenue, Vernon Valley Road, and Laurel Road. The Town is seeking authorization to proceed with a New York Metropolitan Transportation Council Grant (OT1952) to install an interconnected traffic signal system on Larkfield Road. Implementation of this project should help to alleviate traffic congestion.

Traffic congestion is exacerbated during peak travel times when LIRR trains often block the intersection for several minutes. Again, this is an issue that should be addressed if and when electrification of this portion of the Port Jefferson Branch moves forward. Possible solutions include grade separation between Larkfield Road and the LIRR tracks and signal modifications. Both of these options would be expensive

and require Federal Railroad Administration approval.

Walsh Park south of the LIRR tracks is East Northport's primary open space. It has a number of recreational facilities but is physically and visually separated from Larkfield Road. The gas station at the nearby intersection of Larkfield Road and Pulaski Road would be an excellent addition to the park if it were ever to be offered for sale. Acquisition of this property would establish a park presence on Larkfield Road as well as a hamlet gateway feature. To the north, the five-way intersection of Larkfield Road with Bellerose Avenue, Vernon Valley Road, and Laurel Road is a suitable location for another gateway feature. A gateway project in this location could be tied to roadway and circulation improvements.

The C-6 General Business zoning classification is inappropriate for the East Northport Hamlet Center. A new hamlet center zoning classification should be applied to this district. This zoning should have build-to and minimum height requirements and allow for residential units on building upper floors. Stricter sign and aesthetic controls should also be included. Parking requirements should be lowered and shared parking should be allowed.

Given the increasing scarcity of industrial land uses in the Town of Huntington, the industrial zoning along the LIRR right-of-way should be maintained. Several non-conforming residential uses already exist in the industrial zones, so it is important to strengthen landscaping and buffer requirements between industrial and residential uses.

The East Northport hamlet center should also be considered as a receiving site for a Transfer of Density Flow Rights program in support of the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The lack of public sewer service will limit the density that can be achieved.

Goal:

Maintain and enhance the traditional character of East Northport and enhance its role as a community activity center.

Strategies

1. **Zoning:** Change the existing C-6 zone to a new "Hamlet Center" zoning district with the following provisions:
 - Restrict automobile-oriented uses (now permitted as a conditional use).
 - Maintain provisions allowing upper story residential above retail.
 - Require retail uses on ground floor.
 - Allow existing office space to remain as a permitted use.
 - Prohibit visible parking under buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade).



- Adjust the boundaries of the new hamlet center zone to be consistent with land use and property line patterns.
- Eliminate depth extensions.
- Require conditional use permits for buildings above 5,000 square feet (GFA) in size.
- Establish a three-story height limit.
- Establish contextual setback/build-to lines.
- Create a basic design vocabulary/architectural standards for massing and façade treatments that are appropriate for the hamlet zone.
- Establish other design standards to complement hamlet character (e.g., signage).
- Consider East Northport as a receiving site for a Transfer of Density Flow Rights program.

2. Parking: Develop a parking management plan for East Northport to include the following:

- Inventory/document existing parking supply, utilization, and needs, accounting for potential future increased demand if service to the East Northport Station increases in frequency.
- Implement strategies to meet identified needs.
- Develop additional public parking and bicycle facilities if needed.
- Provide clear directional signage for vehicles and sidewalk connections for pedestrians to/from public parking lots.

- Reevaluate off-street parking standards to eliminate any excessive requirements, taking into account impacts on on-street parking demand.
- Consider a “fee in lieu of” of on-site parking provision to provide a funding source and encourage use of off-site (public) rather than on-site parking.
- Coordinate with the parking management system and function within town government proposed for Huntington Village.

3. Mobility: Address traffic congestion along Larkfield Road, including:

- Install an interconnected traffic signal system.
- Improve the Larkfield Road/Bellerose Avenue/Vernon Valley Road/Laurel Road intersection.
- Work with MTA to address backup of vehicles at grade crossing caused by trains at East Northport Station.

4. Physical Improvements: Consider the following improvements to enhance the visual character of East Northport:

- Improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art at gateways into East Northport along Larkfield Road.
- Possible expansion of Walsh Park (located at the southern gateway) to reinforce its function as a community activity center in conjunction with the East Northport library.
- Installation of underground conduits in development/construction projects

to allow for future burying of overhead utilities.

- Street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a “Green/Sustainable Huntington” initiative.

10.2.3 Greenlawn

The Greenlawn hamlet center is located along Greenlawn-Broadway Road (County Route 86) north and south of the LIRR right-of-way. This center is composed of two and three-story buildings with a mix of commercial and institutional uses along Greenlawn-Broadway surrounded by low-density residential neighborhoods. Upper-floor uses in the core are primarily commercial. Some of the older buildings are built to the sidewalk while more recent structures often have parking lots in front. This hamlet center primarily serves the needs of local neighborhood residents.



A post office and library anchor the northern end of the district. South of the LIRR tracks, Greenlawn-Broadway has a more suburban, post-war character with single-story buildings set behind parking lots. Both a CVS and Eckerd's pharmacy have recently opened in this corridor in place of a former local supermarket.

The area along the LIRR right-of-way supports mostly industrial and residential uses. The largest light industrial site in Greenlawn is the BAE Systems property located west of Broadway. Since the amount of industrial land in the Town of Huntington has declined steadily, it is important to maintain such industrially-zoned land whenever possible. At the same time, it will be important to maintain a balance between the existing industrial, retail, and residential uses in Greenlawn.

Parking in Greenlawn is not a significant problem at this time. In the older areas, curbside parking and rear lots provide ample parking for customers and much of it is shared between tenants. In the newer commercial areas,

large parking lots in front of the stores meet the demand. In general, the existing balance between land use and parking works well and should be maintained.

The C-6 General Business zoning classification is inappropriate for Greenlawn. This district allows for automobile-oriented uses and does not limit building bulk and area. Therefore, as in Cold Spring Harbor and East Northport, the existing C-6 zoning should be replaced with a new hamlet center zoning district.

By right, the C-6 zoning classification allows commercial uses to extend 150 feet into the property with an additional 100 feet allowed through a special permit. There are several deep properties in Greenlawn that are zoned C-6, many of which contain parking lots or vegetation near the rear property line. This condition provides a buffer between the core commercial areas and the surrounding residential neighborhoods that should be maintained as part of the new zoning.

Goal:

Maintain the traditional character of Greenlawn.

Strategies

1. Zoning: Change the existing C-6 zone to a new "Hamlet Center" zoning district with the following provisions:

- Restrict automobile-oriented uses (now permitted as a conditional use).
- Maintain provisions allowing upper story residential above retail.
- Require retail uses on ground floor.

- Allow existing office space to remain as a permitted use.
- Prohibit visible parking under buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade).
- Adjust the boundaries of the new hamlet center zone to be consistent with land use and property line patterns.
- Eliminate depth extensions/maintain buffers from adjoining residential uses in the back part of deep commercial properties.
- Require conditional use permits for buildings above 5,000 square feet in size.
- Establish a three-story height limit.
- Establish contextual setback/build-to lines.
- Create a basic design vocabulary/architectural standards for massing and façade treatments that are appropriate for the hamlet zone.
- Establish other design standards to complement hamlet character (e.g., signage).

2. Physical Improvements: Consider the following improvements to enhance the visual character of Greenlawn:

- Improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art at gateways into Greenlawn along Greenlawn-Broadway Road.
- Installation of underground conduits in development/construction projects to allow for future burying of overhead utilities.
- Street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a "Green/Sustainable Huntington" initiative.



10.2.4 Huntington Station

Huntington Station is a significant transit hub located where Route 110 (New York Avenue) crosses the LIRR right-of-way. The electrified portion of the Port Jefferson branch of the LIRR and a large number of the branch trains terminate here. The LIRR station provides a significant opportunity to promote transit-oriented development as a revitalization strategy.¹ This area was once similar to other station areas in the Town of Huntington with a mixed-use core along Route 110, but urban renewal projects and commuter parking lots have replaced most of the original structures north of the tracks. Several mixed-use buildings still stand south of the tracks where they function as a center of the Town's immigrant community. Single-family residential neighborhoods extend beyond the immediate core.

Route 110 through Huntington Station is congested due to heavy vehicular traffic, a high number of stoplights, and multiple parking lots that empty on to the street. Most of the retail parking is on-street, so potential customers have to drive slowly and search for parking spaces. Because a significant percentage of local residents do not own cars, there is a significant amount of pedestrian activity in the corridor.



Huntington Station is a focus of revitalization initiatives by the Town of Huntington. The Town's Economic Development Corporation has four major initiatives in the area: a retail and cultural center development project; streetscape/infrastructure improvements, including development of a new Huntington Station Plaza at the intersection of New York Avenue and Olive Street; a Gateway Park, including conversion of an existing stormwater pond; and grocery/retail development to serve local residents.

The Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID) has taken steps toward improving safety, visual appearance, and commerce in Huntington Station. The BID is raising funds to begin a façade improvement program and to create a gateway district between Pulaski Road and Depot Road.

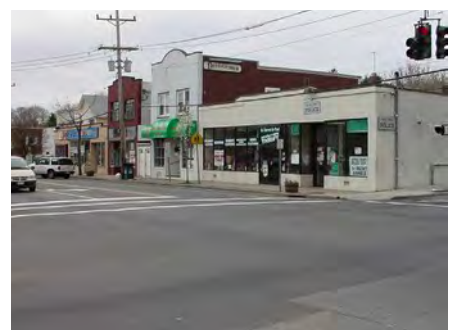
A key question for Huntington Station's future is where to establish a new walkable, mixed-use commercial center to serve the neighborhood and restore its traditional function as a hamlet center. Huntington Station Plaza in conjunction with a portion of the parking lot on the west side of New York Avenue could be a suitable location for such a district. Connection to the LIRR station is important to promote transit-oriented development.



The Huntington Station geographic focal area contains a number of different zoning districts. New York Avenue and Depot Road are zoned C-6 General Business. Various industrial zones line the LIRR right-of-way and include large parcels west of New York Avenue. North of the station, the large apartment complexes are zoned R-3M Garden Apartment. Finally, single-family residential districts are located on the edges of Huntington Station.

The fragmented zoning hampers the creation of a coherent development pattern and overall identity for Huntington Station. A zoning overlay district was created to remedy some of the problems created by the existing zoning. Replacement of this overlay with a new mixed-use zoning district or hamlet center zoning is an option to promote more unified, compatible development of the area. Another option is to modify the existing zoning overlay. The large industrial properties along the LIRR should be maintained, balanced with the need to accommodate a grocery store in the neighborhood and for buffering from adjacent neighborhoods.

A comprehensive parking study should be undertaken for the commuter parking lots and the area south of the station. This study should address bicycles as well as automobiles.



Because of the large number of parking spaces in the area, many opportunities for shared parking exist. To the south of the station, St. Hugh's Catholic Church and the industrial sites between 4th Street and Pulaski Road should be considered for shared parking to serve nearby commercial uses.

The area north of the LIRR is served by public sewer provided by the Huntington Sewer District while the area to the south is not. There is limited space for new septic systems. For this reason, larger scale developments should be considered north of the tracks first.

Goal:

Promote the revitalization of Huntington Station to restore its traditional role as a hamlet center.

Strategies

1. Zoning: Change the existing C-6/Huntington Station Overlay District to a new "Hamlet Center" zoning district with the following provisions:

- Retain permitted and prohibited uses from overlay district.
- Maintain C-6 provisions allowing upper story residential above retail.
- Require retail uses on ground floor.
- Allow existing office space to remain as a permitted use.
- Prohibit visible parking under buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade).
- Adjust boundaries of new hamlet center zone to be consistent with existing/

proposed land use and property line patterns (e.g., extend along frontage of the west side of New York Avenue between Broadway/Railroad Avenue and Church Street to allow for retail/mixed-use redevelopment of the existing parking lot).

- Eliminate depth extensions.
- Require conditional use permits for buildings above 5,000 square feet (GFA) in size.
- Maintain the 45' height limit.
- Establish contextual setback/build-to lines.
- Create a basic design vocabulary/architectural standards for massing and façade treatments that are appropriate for the hamlet zone.
- Establish other design standards to complement hamlet character (e.g., signage).

2. Parking: Develop a parking management plan for Huntington Station to include the following:

- Inventory/document existing parking supply, utilization, and needs, including bicycle parking.
- Implement strategies to meet identified needs.
 - Explore solutions such as shared MTA/church parking and development of additional public parking.
 - Provide clear directional signage for vehicles and safe and attractive sidewalk connections for pedestrians to/from public parking lots.

- Reevaluate off-street parking standards to eliminate any excessive requirements, taking into account impacts on on-street parking demand.
- Consider a "fee in lieu of" of on-site parking provision to provide a funding source and encourage use of off-site (public) rather than on-site parking.
 - › Reduce/waive fee as an incentive for desired types of development.
 - › Consider increasing existing fees for LIRR lots managed by the Town.
- Coordinate with parking management system and function within town government proposed for Huntington Village.

3. Mobility: Address traffic congestion along New York Avenue, including:

- Work with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to improve signal coordination.

4. Physical Improvements: Consider the following improvements to the physical environment of Huntington Station to encourage revitalization:

- Continue the Economic Development Corporation's Huntington Station Revitalization Program (streetscape, public park/community gathering space, etc.).
- Develop and implement a façade improvement program in collaboration with the Huntington Station BID.
- Work with MTA to improve the visual character of Huntington Station.

- Implement street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a “Green/Sustainable Huntington” initiative, including coordination with MTA re. the LIRR station parking lots.
- Develop and implement an area-wide stormwater management program, including sustainable stormwater management practices.
- Install underground conduits in development/construction projects to allow for future burying of overhead utilities.

5. Catalytic Development: Assemble land and pursue public/private partnerships for the development of key parcels/projects to promote the revitalization of Huntington Station as a hamlet center, including:

- The proposed Huntington Station Plaza and Gateway Park.
- New York Avenue/Depot Road intersection area.
- Possible redevelopment site off West 4th Street.
- Parking lot along west side of New York Avenue between Broadway/Railroad Avenue and Church Street (potential new hamlet center in conjunction with Huntington Station Plaza across New York Avenue).
- Possible brownfield opportunity area.

6. Sewer Service: Provide public sewer or Transfer of Density Flow Rights credits for projects meeting Comprehensive Plan goals.

10.2.5 Huntington Village

Huntington Village is a traditional commercial center with a unique character located around the intersection of NYS 110 and NYS 25A. It is a retail hub for the entire Town of Huntington and its role as an office and commercial center has increased recently.

The heart of the village is made up of two and three-story mixed use buildings from the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Today, these buildings house restaurants, local and national retailers, and service providers as well as small offices and residences. These uses are complemented by a grocery store, post office, movie theater, and other uses that make this district an important community center for the local neighborhood and the Town of Huntington in general. The restaurant cluster in the village has thrived in recent years, but it is important to maintain a diversity of businesses as the restaurant industry is susceptible to market fluctuations.

Because Huntington Village has such a dense concentration of important land uses, a large amount of land area is dedicated to parking. While there is some curbside parking, most of the parking in the neighborhood is concentrated in surface lots located behind buildings and on the fringes of the retail hub.



A transition zone exists between the mixed-use village center and the surrounding neighborhoods, which are made up mostly of single-family residential and a few apartment and condominium complexes. As the demand for office space in Huntington Village has grown, several houses in the first residential ring have been converted – often without proper permitting or required zoning changes – to office uses. The businesses that occupy the houses on the fringe have gradually changed the character of the neighborhood. The transition zone between the village core and nearby residential neighborhoods should be clearly defined because a buffer is needed between the core commercial and residential zones.

Recently, demand for residential units has been increasing in Huntington Village. Many high-value units are being developed in building upper floors above ground-floor retail. These units are commanding high rents and the tenants demand convenient parking spaces nearby. Because a parking space can be worth \$500 to \$1000 per month, apartments without parking are virtually the only affordable units in the village. The demand for residential parking spaces increases the scarcity of parking for commercial uses as well.

As the amount of pedestrian activity and the general popularity of Huntington Village has



risen, so too have concerns about pedestrian safety. Recently, efforts have been made to improve pedestrian safety and comfort with enhanced crosswalks and sidewalk beautification projects. However, further traffic calming and pedestrian enhancements will be needed to balance pedestrian and vehicular circulation in this busy center. Crosswalks and pedestrian safety should be improved in areas where drivers do not expect to encounter pedestrians, such as the successful effort to mark and signalize the intersection of Main Street and Prospect Street.

Delivery trucks currently double-park at the curbs and in the middle of streets to unload, exacerbating traffic congestion in the village. Loading zones are needed to solve this problem. Alleys and rear parking lots could be used for deliveries, but ownership issues must be overcome in order to implement this strategy.

Parking in Huntington Village is more difficult than anywhere else in the Town of Huntington. Few businesses have their own parking and most parking is available either on-street or in shared lots. The Town has recently added 180 new parking spaces in two lots, but this will not satisfy the demand. The lack of convenient parking has served to reduce the incursion of national chains, and independent restaurants and stores remain strong.

Currently, the town pays for the provision of surface parking lots, but cannot afford to provide structured parking without charging drivers. Construction of parking decks has been discussed for years but has experienced opposition from residents concerned about visual and traffic impacts as well as high up-front capital costs. There may be less resistance to contemporary concepts such as a retail “wrap” or a structure that is terraced into a sloping hillside parcel. The Gerard Street site opposite the Post Office may be large enough for a wrapped parking deck. Opportunities for terraced parking exist among the sloping streets in the eastern portion of the village, such as Elm Street, just east of Main Street. If Huntington Village continues to grow in scale and popularity, a parking deck must be seriously considered in the context of a comprehensive parking study. Otherwise, the proliferation of surface parking lots will erode the pedestrian character of the village.

A comprehensive parking study should undertaken to investigate municipal parking management, pricing and circulation. Shared parking and reduced parking requirements should be specifically addressed. The potential for a fee system that charges businesses for the right to use municipal parking should also be studied. Another possible plan would be a three-tier system that charges a premium

for short-term, on-street parking and progressively lower prices for close-in lots and remote parking.

The Huntington Village geographic focal area is almost entirely zoned C-6 General Business, although there is some residential and less-intense commercial zoning at the edges of the district. The C-6 zoning classification is inadequate to achieve the goals for Huntington Village. It contains very few design requirements and does little to prevent the permitting of structures and land uses that would harm the historic charm and character of the village. Money is being spent on neighborhood beautification projects, but the zoning allows for development that might negate the enhancements.

A special downtown zoning classification or overlay should be created for Huntington Village. This new “Village Center” zoning should maintain the pattern of multi-story, mixed-use row buildings in the core and residential buildings on the fringe. Automobile-oriented uses should be restricted. In terms of design and building envelope requirements, the new zoning should maintain the existing, contextual build-to line. Ground floor facades should be transparent and building entrances should be required at regular intervals.



Large “big box” retail stores are inappropriate in Huntington Village. As an example of why such uses are undesirable, the building footprints of new pharmacies in the region are typically in the range of 7,000 to 12,000 square feet in size. With the typical lot size in Huntington Village, a prototypical drug store would require the consolidation of several lots – possibly necessitating demolition of existing structures. To prevent such development from occurring, the new zoning should set maximum building footprint requirements.

There is increasing demand for office space on the eastern edge of Huntington Village, especially near Town Hall. Therefore, the existing C-1 Office/Residence zoning classification should be considered for these areas.

Because Huntington Village exists at the intersection of two major state roads, there are several opportunities to create notable gateways. At present, the western gateway at Main Street and Lawrence Hill Road is the best entrance to the village with high-quality landscaping and a striking sculpture. The far eastern gateway on Main Street at Park Avenue needs to be upgraded. Here, a lone and unadorned millstone is all that signifies arrival to one of the Town’s most important districts. This park should be improved by landscaping, possibly adding a sculptural element at the corner, and by constructing a sidewalk where there is currently a dirt path. Closer to the mixed-use center, a gateway feature could be located near the intersection of Stewart Avenue and Main Street. Along Route 110, there are gateway opportunities near the intersections with High Street and Girard Street or Leverich Place.

The existing Business Improvement District (BID) is well-organized and focuses on beau-

tification and special events. The mission of this organization could be expanded to provide the capacity and expertise to operate the proposed parking management system and traffic issues in Huntington Village.

Goal:

Maintain and enhance the character and function of Huntington Village as a traditional retail center, community destination, and residential neighborhood.

Strategies

1. Zoning: Change the existing C-6 zone to a new “Village Center” zoning district in the Core and less intensive zone(s) on the fringes (e.g., C-4 or C-1) to match current land uses, including the following provisions:

- Restrict automobile-oriented uses (now permitted as a conditional use).
- Require retail uses on ground floor.
- Allow existing office space to remain as a permitted use.
- Prohibit visible parking under buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade)
- Maintain provisions allowing upper story residential above retail.
- Maintain the 45’ height limit.
- Require conditional use permits for buildings above 5,000 square feet in size.
- Adjust the boundaries of new hamlet

center zone to be consistent with land use and property line patterns

- Eliminate depth extensions.
- Establish contextual setback/build-to lines.
- Create a basic design vocabulary/architectural standards for massing and façade treatments that are appropriate for the hamlet zone.
- Establish other design standards to complement village character (e.g., signage).

2. Parking: Develop a parking management plan for Huntington Village to include the following:

- Inventory/document existing parking supply, utilization, and needs.
- Implement strategies to meet identified needs.
 - Develop additional public parking as needed, including consideration of a well-designed parking deck compatible with village character (as opposed to land-consumptive surface parking lots).
 - Provide clear directional signage for vehicles and sidewalk connections for pedestrians to/from public parking lots.
 - Reevaluate off-street parking standards to eliminate any excessive requirements, taking into account impacts on on-street parking demand.
 - Establish a “fee in lieu of” of on-site parking provision to provide a funding source and encourage use of off-site (public) rather than on-site parking.

- Establish a parking management system and function within town government.
- Coordinate parking efforts with the Huntington Village BID.

3. Physical Improvements: Consider the following improvements to enhance the visual character of Huntington Village:

- Inventory vacant/underutilized portions of properties and analyze their potential for landscaping or public plaza space.
- Implement improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art at key gateways:
 - New York Avenue at High Street.
 - West Main Street at Lawrence Hill Road.
 - East Main Street at Park Avenue.
- Implement street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a “Green/Sustainable Huntington” initiative.
- Install underground conduits in development/construction projects to allow for future burying of overhead utilities.

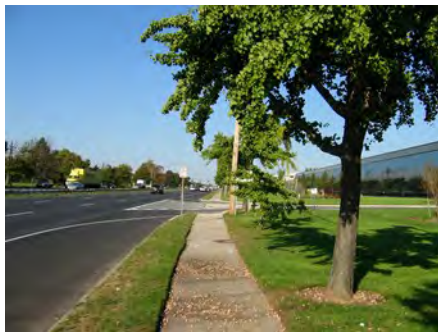
4. Mobility: Address traffic congestion and safety “hot spots” and promote pedestrian/ bicycle movement, including:

- Install new or improved pedestrian crosswalks at key locations and move crosswalks where possible to signalized intersections with appropriate pedestrian signals.

- Work with NYSDOT to establish pedestrian and bicycle connections along New York Avenue from Main Street to Huntington Harbor.
- Provide convenient and attractive bicycle parking and bus stops.

5. Sewer Service: Establish criteria for the allocation of sewer capacity to support Comprehensive Plan objectives, and coordinate planning actions with the Huntington Sewer Plan.

10.3 Commercial Centers and Corridors



10.3.1 Melville Employment Center

Located near the Long Island Expressway and Northern Parkway in the southwest corner of the Town of Huntington, the Melville Employment Center is one of the most important commercial concentrations on Long Island and the Town's largest source of employment and tax revenue. Route 110 runs north-south through the heart of the district, providing connections to Huntington Village, Walt Whitman Mall, and Farmingdale. Several large companies are headquartered in this area, including Nikon, Newsday, Underwriters Laboratory and Sbarro. Canon USA intends to build its North American headquarters on a site near the junction of the Long Island Expressway and NYS 110. With its concentration of business activity and exceptional roadway access, Melville's moniker of "Long Island's Main Street" is well deserved.

The development pattern of the Melville Employment Center consists of suburban office buildings interspersed with some industrial and warehouse properties. Most office uses are located near Route 110 and Pinelawn Road while industrial uses are located along Spagnoli Road and other smaller roadways. Some residential uses and large, undeveloped tracts are located on the fringes of Melville.

The Melville Employment Center displays many of the characteristics of older suburban office centers, including large, low buildings set behind expansive parking lots. The effect of this development pattern is that most of the available land area has been consumed by buildings and parking lots, leaving little room for landscaping and open space. In addition to negative visual impacts, the impervious parking lot surfaces contribute to stormwater management problems.

Because of the land consumptive character of existing development, growth pressures in the Melville Employment Center are likely to create pressures for taller buildings. However, more office space will require more parking spaces and increase traffic congestion. Parking requirements could be met through the provision of structured parking, either above or below grade. The proposed Canon headquarters is an example of a development type consisting of taller buildings and structured parking in order to preserve open space.

Melville contains some of the largest tracts of undeveloped land left in the Town of Huntington. The ownership of one of these properties, Pineridge Park, has been the subject of a decades-long legal dispute. If the issue is resolved in the favor of the Town, the formal dedication of this property as public parkland would provide important open space, enhance the natural resource value of the adjacent West Hills County Park and Bethpage State Park, and provide an extensive trail system.

A sand mine that is listed as a Superfund clean fill site is located south of the Pineridge property. A long-term, phased cleanup is under way north of Spagnoli Road and several hundred acres of land will become available over time. This land could become a regional recreation area and an extension of Pineridge Park. A regional attraction – such as a golf course – located on this site would be a valuable amenity for the Town and for the Melville Employment Center.

Recently, several planned unit residential developments and senior housing projects have been constructed on the fringes of the Melville Employment Center. Many of these developments abut Old Walt Whitman Road and Pinelawn Road. Because these residential areas are isolated from retail and community

services, nearly every errand requires residents to drive. This contributes to traffic congestion and becomes a potential safety issue as the age of residents in senior housing developments increases.

The road network in the Melville Employment Center is focused on Route 110. Because it links Melville to the Long Island Expressway, Northern State Parkway, and Southern State Parkway, as well as to important destinations to the north and south, Route 110 is extremely congested, especially during the morning and evening commute periods. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is planning to make significant improvements to Route 110 between the Long Island Expressway and Northern State Parkway to help alleviate this situation.

Several transportation studies have been prepared for the Route 110 corridor and recommend a number of strategies to improve transportation and circulation. These strategies include, but are not limited to, re-opening the Republic Airport Long Island Railroad station; enhancing bus service (including possible development of bus rapid transit); and implementing car sharing services for Route 110 employees who take transit to work but need a car during the day. A Transportation Management Association (TMA) could be created to study, fund, and implement proposed transportation enhancements for the Route 110 corridor.

The Melville Employment Center is a suburban, automobile-oriented commercial district that is poorly designed for pedestrians. While most streets do have sidewalks, the distance between buildings, wide roads with heavy traffic volumes, and a general lack of amenities create an environment where very few people walk. There are few community

services in the district, which forces employees to use their automobiles during the course of the workday. This extra driving activity, in turn, generates a third peak-congestion period around the lunch hour. These conditions contribute to high levels of traffic congestion and other quality of life issues.

Future development in the Melville Employment Center should seek to retrofit the existing pattern in order to promote pedestrian accessibility and limit the need for employees to drive during the workday. There are several ways to achieve this goal, including encouraging a mix of land uses, establishing stronger design guidelines for buildings and walking paths, improving transit service, and allowing for existing office cafeterias to market to customers from other buildings. Replacing the “one-size-fits-all” parking standard of one space per 250 square feet with a requirement tied to actual occupancy or use and opportunities for shared parking should be explored to reduce the number of parking spaces required to serve developments.

The Town should also promote the development of small, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use “town centers” at strategic locations in the Melville Employment Center. Such centers would contain retail and restaurant offerings as well as recreation, business services, and entertainment opportunities. Workforce residential units could also be considered in these locations.

One possible “town center” site is located at the northern end of Route 110 near the interchange with Northern Parkway and would serve as a gateway to the Melville Employment Center. Another possible site is near the intersection of Maxess Road and Ruland Road next to the former Vanderbilt Parkway. The right-of-way from the Vanderbilt Parkway could

form the “spine” of a pedestrian and bicycle trail network linking the office and industrial uses to the proposed mixed use centers.

Although sewer lines have been extended into the Melville Employment Center, the area is not part of the Southwest Sewer District. The sewer district is reaching capacity, so it will be increasingly difficult for new projects to connect. An area-wide sewer strategy is needed to address this issue. In addition, an area-wide stormwater management strategy, including “Best Management Practices” that slow, diminish, and improve the quality of stormwater runoff, should be developed as a part of the Sustainable Huntington key initiative proposed by the Comprehensive Plan.

Achieving the desired character of the Melville Employment Center will require changes to the existing zoning. Creation of a new office/employment zone should be considered with height, bulk, density, and open space requirements that encourage a campus-like environment and make more economical use of land values. Taller office buildings should be considered in areas of high visibility. The Canon headquarters project provides a model for the type of height, open space, parking, and other standards that could be incorporated into this district. Landscaping requirements should be strengthened in the new office as well as in industrial and residential districts. Requirements to address impacts on traffic, infrastructure, and community facilities should be incorporated into new zoning regulations.

With regard to permitted uses, warehouse and distribution should be discouraged while research and development facilities should be encouraged. While it is not appropriate for most of Melville to be zoned Light Industrial zoning (the existing zoning designation), core industrial zones should be identified and

reserved for industrial uses. Currently, hotels and extended-stay facilities must locate in site-specific hotel zones. Hotels should be a permitted use in a new office or office/mixed use zones.

Looking ahead, marketing and cooperation among businesses and local governments should play a role in the future of the Melville area. The Route 110 Corridor Partnership is a good marketing approach to promoting biotech business development but has not focused on infrastructure development in the area. Melville area businesses are likely to welcome an organization that has capacity to make needed infrastructure projects happen. A Special Improvement District, which would have the ability to levy taxes on participating properties for a variety of purposes related to the enhancement of the district (e.g., pedestrian/bicycle and streetscape improvements), should be considered as a vehicle to meet this need.

Finally, there is an opportunity to strengthen and leverage the relationship between the municipalities that share the Route 110 Corridor – the Town of Huntington and the Town of Babylon. These two towns already have a solid working relationship that could be further developed in conjunction with the Route 110 Corridor Partnership. Together, public and private sector partners could cooperate in the creation of a Transportation Management Association, development of a corridor master plan, and implementation of major infrastructure projects.

Numerous complex issues, such as traffic congestion, employment opportunity, fiscal benefits and costs, and visual character, need to be considered and balanced in planning for the future of the Melville Employment Cen-

ter. While the Comprehensive Plan sets an overall framework for addressing these issues, more detailed planning and analysis of factors such as existing and future traffic levels is needed to define a specific action agenda. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan proposes preparation of an integrated land use, transportation, and infrastructure plan designed to maintain and enhance Melville as Huntington's major employment hub.

Goal:

Manage growth and change to maintain Melville's position as an employment hub, address community impacts, and improve development character.

Strategies

1. Area Plan: Prepare an integrated land use, circulation, and infrastructure plan for the Melville Employment Center to address the following:

– Land Use:

- Office/employment uses.
- Industrial uses (define area to be retained in industrial use – e.g., along Spagnoli Road).
- Residential uses (limit to existing residential zones, promote workforce rather than senior housing).
- Mixed-use hamlet center(s) to meet local needs for retail and services and reduce traffic (e.g., in the vicinity of the Maxess Road/Ruland Road intersection).
- Open space (Pineridge Park and future sand mine reclamation as a regional

open space/recreational resource).

– Circulation:

- Traffic congestion.
 - › Level of service/carrying capacity.
 - › Access management/control of curbs cuts along major roadways.
 - › Improved connectivity for vehicles.
 - › Traffic impact requirements for new developments.
 - › Roadway improvement program to address congestion and improve circulation.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the employment area and to destinations such as the hamlet center(s).
- Enhanced transit service.

– Community Facilities and Services:

- Sewage capacity for new developments.
- Area-wide stormwater management, including sustainable practices such as vegetated areas and swales to promote infiltration, pervious pavement, etc.
- Property tax revenues from office/industrial development vs. potential impacts on schools from new residential development.

– Design:

- Quality design standards for new development to promote a campus-like environment, including building height and form in relationship to parking and open space requirements.

- Gateway and other visual improvements.
 - Coordination with Town of Babylon re. entire Route 110 employment corridor.
- 2. Zoning:** Revise existing zoning districts to reflect the desired land use pattern defined in the area plan, including:
- New office/employment zone.
 - Adjust permitted uses (limit industry to biotechnology-related uses such as research laboratories, allow hotel/extended stay hotels, etc.).
 - Revise accessory use provisions to promote local-serving retail/food services.
 - Establish minimum open space requirement.
 - Review off-street parking standards/parking structure requirements.
 - Improve landscaping/design standards.
 - Industrial zone
 - Consider limiting to industrial uses.
 - Review off-street parking standards.
 - Improve landscaping/design standards and prohibit their reduction through variances.
 - New hamlet center (mixed-use) zone (possibly modeled after new zoning district recommended for existing hamlet centers).
 - Incentives for “green” buildings and solar power as part of the Sustainable Huntington Initiative.

- 3. Mobility:** Implement the circulation recommendations of the area plan.
- Develop a capital improvements program in coordination with NYSDOT and Suffolk County to address traffic congestion and safety “hot spots” (signal coordination, intersection improvements, etc.) .
 - Consult with Suffolk County to determine if the Pinelawn Road traffic signals can be upgraded/coordinated.
 - Include key pedestrian/bicycle connections in the capital improvements program and incorporate standards to provide for pedestrian/bicycle connectivity in zoning/development regulations.
 - Work with transit providers to improve transit service.
 - Initiate a transportation management program with major employers to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles.
- 4. Physical Improvements:** Consider the following improvements to enhance the character of the Melville Employment Area:
- Improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art at key gateways.
 - Street tree and parking lot plantings as part of a “Green/Sustainable Huntington” initiative.
- 5. Management:** Consider establishment of a Special Improvement District funded through assessments on properties within the Melville Employment Area to help manage and fund implementation actions (e.g., visual improvements, transportation management program).

10.3.2 Jericho Turnpike

Running east-west through the central part of Huntington, Jericho Turnpike is one of Long Island’s most important transportation and retail corridors. The character of this major arterial roadway reflects different generations of commercial architecture. Single-story retail buildings, strip malls, big boxes, former shopping malls, and fast food franchises line much of the corridor from the Town’s western to eastern boundary. In addition, a number of new and used car dealers are located along Jericho Turnpike. The variety of building types indicates that the corridor is constantly evolving to keep up with changing retail market trends. This change has resulted in a relatively high level of vacancy, especially in the most outdated areas located away from major intersections and nodes.

Traffic levels on Jericho Turnpike are very high, especially during peak commuter hours and on weekends when shoppers come from all over Huntington and surrounding municipalities. Congested areas include intersections such as Oakwood Road, Park Avenue/Broadway, Route 110/New York Avenue, Elwood Road and Larkfield Road.

A lack of left turn lanes, inappropriately located traffic signals, and a proliferation of curb cuts serving individual properties are major causes of traffic congestion along Jericho Turnpike. Several traffic signals have been installed without evaluating their wider effects on traffic flow in the corridor. Dedicated left turn lanes should be considered wherever possible. Because large projects are subject to planning review, the Town could use this opportunity to implement solutions such as dedication of land for turn lanes and consolidated/shared curb cuts.

It is very difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate Jericho Turnpike. Sidewalks should be added wherever possible. The road is too heavily traveled by vehicles to safely accommodate bicycle traffic and there is not enough space within the right-of-way to support a continuous bike path. To support alternative transportation as part of the “Sustainable Huntington” initiative, a bike route could be created near Jericho Turnpike by signing parallel roads and building connections where necessary.

Currently, most of the corridor is lined with C-6 General Business zoning. Because of the character of its commercial uses, Jericho Turnpike is one of the few places in the Town where C-6 zoning may be appropriate. However, the lack of design guidelines and land use controls in the C-6 district contributes to issues such as poor visual character and traffic congestion. In addition, the C-6 depth extension provisions have resulted in commercial intrusions into adjacent residential areas.

An R-40 single-family residential zone between Warner Road and Manor Road provides a significant break in the predominantly commercial land use pattern of the corridor. Other zoning districts include areas of C-5 Planned Shopping Center and industrial districts located near the intersection of Jericho Turnpike with Larkfield Road. Most of the

land behind the commercial properties along the corridor is zoned for single-family residential neighborhoods.

The future design concept for the corridor is to focus development in mixed-use nodes with transportation improvements at major intersections while limiting the intensity of development between the nodes, thus improving traffic flow, land use patterns, and visual character. This concept is most feasible where there are large, deep lots with enough room to create development that is buffered from surrounding residential neighborhoods (e.g., the intersection of Dix Hills Road with Jericho Turnpike).

To encourage and allow the development of nodes, a new overlay zoning category – Major Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use – should be created. This category should contain design guidelines to foster an inviting, walkable environment (e.g., bringing buildings to the street with ample landscape buffers and providing for ground floor commercial uses with residential or office above). Impacts on traffic, community facilities (e.g., schools), and infrastructure (e.g., wastewater disposal) should be addressed as part of the overlay requirements.

Development in Major Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use zones should focus on previously developed sites to address the pattern of obso-

lescence that characterizes the corridor. Obsolescent commercial properties between nodes may be good candidates for smaller scale mixed uses. “Greenfield” development should be limited and zoning used to support this policy.

Access to new developments should be controlled and managed. Wherever possible, curb cuts should be limited and lots should be consolidated to simplify parking. Parking should be placed behind buildings and shared with neighboring properties wherever possible. Improved landscaping requirements—especially in parking areas—would help to address flooding issues as part of a corridor-wide stormwater management program. Improved landscaping and design standards for private developments combined with gateway and other visual improvements to the Jericho Turnpike right-of-way would enhance the visual character of this major corridor.

Jericho Turnpike Goals:

1. **Improve traffic flow, visual character, and economic viability along the Jericho Turnpike corridor.**
2. **Protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.**
3. **Promote redevelopment of obsolescent or under-utilized properties to meet Comprehensive Plan objectives.**



Strategies

1. Zoning: Enact a new “Major Commercial Corridor/Mixed Use” overlay zoning district to apply to commercial zones along Jericho Turnpike.

- Focus more intense commercial/mixed uses in nodes.
 - Establish criteria for node location, e.g.:
 - › Good north-south as well as east-west roadway access.
 - › Larger, deeper lots with minimal environmental constraints.
 - › Compatibility with adjacent land uses.
 - › Redevelopment of previously developed properties as opposed to new (greenfield) development.
 - › Coordination with transit service.
 - Enact design standards to promote an attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment.
 - Explore provision of a density bonus (one extra floor) on properties with sufficient capacity in exchange for additional community amenities (e.g., public open space, workforce housing, community-serving facilities and services such as day care, etc.).
 - Require traffic/community facilities impact study.
- Promote less intense development between nodes.
 - Limit size of commercial developments.
 - Allow residential as a standalone use.
 - Limit depth extensions/intrusions into

adjacent residential neighborhoods.

- Include corridor-wide design standards to address the following:
 - Access management.
 - Building mass, scale, façade design.
 - Landscaping/open space requirements (tied to stormwater management).
 - Sidewalk/streetscape improvements.
 - Buffer/transition requirements next to residential uses.
 - Signage.

2. Physical Improvements: Improve the visual character of Jericho Turnpike.

- Coordinate with NYSDOT on improvements to Jericho Turnpike, beginning with the designated nodes.
 - Visual improvements (street trees, possible incremental establishment of a landscaped median in coordination with dedicated/prohibited left turn lanes, etc.).
 - Multi-modal (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) improvements.
- Implement gateway improvements such as landscaping, signage, and public art at Huntington’s boundaries and at the designated nodes.
- Promote removal of overhead utilities at nodes in conjunction with redevelopment projects.
- Develop and implement a corridor stormwater management program, including sustainable stormwater management practices.

3. Mobility: Address traffic congestion.

- Apply access management strategies (driveway control, consolidated curb cuts, cross connections between properties, etc.).
- Work with NYSDOT to implement traffic flow improvements to the Jericho Turnpike/Route 110 intersection.
- Implement traffic flow improvements to other intersections in coordination with node development (e.g., Elwood Road/Jericho Turnpike/Park Avenue).
- Coordinate traffic signal timing and location.
- Identify protected/prohibited left turns, possibly in conjunction with median installation.

4. Wastewater Disposal: Explore options for wastewater disposal with the Suffolk County Department of Health Services for mixed-use nodes or residential projects.

- Transfer of density flow rights program.
- Alternative on-site systems.



10.3.3 Route 110 (Jericho Turnpike to Melville)

This section of Route 110 is a busy commercial corridor anchored by the intersection with Jericho Turnpike and the Walt Whitman Mall to the north and the southern end of the Melville Employment Center at Pinelawn Road to the south. With the exception of the Walt Whitman Mall, most of the businesses are smaller scale single-story, mid to late-20th Century strip retail centers and free-standing stores. There are some single-family residences along Route 110, but most of them face away from the road and are screened by landscaping.

This corridor is heavily automobile-oriented and Route 110 itself is designed for high speed traffic with a median barrier along much of its length. This section of Route 110 provides access for town residents to the Northern Parkway, Long Island Expressway, and the Melville Employment Center as well as regional access to the Walt Whitman Mall. The close interface between the high-speed Route 110 and neighboring residential areas must be carefully addressed in corridor planning and zoning.

The Walt Whitman Mall is competing generally well in the Long Island retail market. The owners have plans to expand the mall, possibly by constructing a second floor, sev-



eral “pad” restaurants, and parking structures. Mall expansion will significantly impact traffic and improvements to mitigate these impacts must be included in the project. Inappropriately designed and located parking structures along Route 110 or New York Avenue would negatively impact the corridor’s visual character as well as adjacent residential areas. The Town should encourage the mall owners to investigate design approaches that create a stronger sense of place through techniques that have been used in popular and successful “lifestyle centers” elsewhere in the country. These centers often contain community gathering spaces.

Zoning along Route 110 between Jericho Turnpike and Melville is predominantly commercial with some residential. The Walt Whitman Mall is zoned C-5 Planned Shopping Center. Other commercial zoning districts include C-6 General Business, C-8 General Business A, one property zoned C-11 Automotive Service Station, and several properties that have been rezoned C-1 Office Residential. With the exception of the Walt Whitman Mall, the zoning districts are limited to relatively narrow parcels lining Route 110 and abutting residential land uses to the rear. The C-6 (and C-8) zoning classifications are inappropriate to the scale of the commercial development and its close juxtaposition with residential uses. Therefore, a change to the more neighborhood-oriented C-4 zoning classification should be considered for the existing C-6 and C-8 zones. Approaches such as shared curb cuts, consolidated parking areas, and signage and façade improvements should be used to improve traffic flow as well as the appearance and viability of the smaller commercial properties. Residential zones should be strengthened and protected from incursions from commercial uses.

NYSDOT has a significant reconstruction project planned to improve traffic flow at the at the Route 110/Jericho Turnpike/New York Avenue intersection. At the southern end of the geographic focal area, NYSDOT plans to upgrade Route 110 between the Long Island Expressway and Northern Parkway, including the Pinelawn Road intersection.

Route 110 would benefit from street tree plantings, other streetscape improvements, and enhanced accommodations for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit movement coordinated with NYSDOT. Wherever possible, commercial properties and parking lots (such as in a mall redevelopment) should be retrofitted with green areas, street trees, and stormwater management techniques as part of a “Sustainable Huntington” initiative.

Route 110 Goals:

1. Manage future expansion or redevelopment of Walt Whitman Mall to address community impacts and provide needed infrastructure improvements.
2. Improve the character and viability of smaller commercial uses.
3. Protect adjacent residential neighborhoods and maintain the existing balance between residential and commercial uses.

Strategies

1. Zoning: Change existing zoning to better “fit” land use character and to promote quality, compatible development along Route 110.

- Review and revise existing zoning categories.
 - › Consolidate the existing commercial zoning districts along Route 110 (with the exception of the Walt Whitman Mall C-5 zone) into a single zoning district (e.g., Neighborhood Business) that matches the character and scale of existing commercial development.
 - › Reevaluate the boundaries between commercial and residential zoning based on land use and property line patterns, with the objective of reinforcing the viability of commercial and residential uses.
- Enact design standards for commercial uses, possibly through a commercial corridor overlay district (see “Other Commercial Corridors” section below).

2. Walt Whitman Mall Expansion:

Establish guidelines for mall expansion/redevelopment to minimize negative impacts, enhance visual character, and improve its role as a center of community activity.

- Circulation.
 - Improvements to mitigate traffic impacts, including:
 - › NYSDOT requirements for the previous mall redevelopment.
 - › Interconnected traffic signal system

along New York Avenue.

- Safe and convenient vehicular circulation within the site and connections to adjacent commercial properties.
 - Transit/pedestrian connections and improvements to the pedestrian environment.
 - Building design.
 - › Guidelines for mass/scale, façade articulation, treatment of building entrances, etc..
 - › Prohibition on freestanding buildings with separate curb cuts along Route 110.
 - › Parking structures set back from Route 110 and “lined” with uses and/or buried underground (no exposed facades).
 - Landscaping/open space.
 - › Improved landscape buffers at the perimeter of property.
 - › Improved parking lot landscaping.
 - › “Green” areas to replace pavement, thus providing open space and sustainable means of stormwater treatment.
 - Public amenities, including landscaping and dedicated public use space.
- 3. Physical Improvements:** Improve the visual character of Route 110.
- Implement a façade and signage improvement program for small commercial properties along Route 110.
 - Coordinate with NYSDOT on visual (landscape median treatment, street trees,

etc.) and multi-modal (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) improvements to Route 110.

4. Mobility: Address traffic congestion and neighborhood cut-through traffic.

- Apply access management strategies to smaller commercial properties along Route 110 (driveway control, consolidated curb cuts, connections between adjacent commercial properties, etc.).
- Work with NYSDOT to implement traffic flow improvements to the Route 110/Jericho Turnpike intersection.
- Implement traffic calming to reduce cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets such as Pine Tree and Peachtree.

10.3.4 Minor Commercial Corridors

There are a number of other commercial corridors located throughout the Town of Huntington. They include portions of Route 25A, Route 110 and corridors leading into it north of Jericho Turnpike, and Larkfield Road between East Northport and Jericho Turnpike. Some of these corridors have significant traffic and commerce while others are small and serve local neighborhoods. The primary issues facing these corridors are economic viability and the preservation or enhancement of existing character. Recommendations for these corridors are designed to promote the redevelopment of obsolescent and underutilized properties while improving pedestrian-oriented character and “sense of place.”

Traffic issues vary from corridor to corridor. Some corridors experience minor traffic levels while others experience congestion and other

problems such as safety issues and conflicts between through traffic and on-street parking. The older commercial corridors tend to have parking shortages while newer ones have ample parking.

In general, C-6 General Business zoning prevails in the Town's minor commercial corridors. As in the other geographic focal areas, this zoning classification does not promote the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. A new mixed-use commercial corridor zoning district would address many of the issues facing these corridors. Small-scale commercial, office, and residential uses should be allowed with design standards to preserve and enhance existing character. Examples of such design standards



include requirements for active and transparent ground floors, enhanced landscaping, and appropriate, pedestrian-scaled signage.

Physical improvements such as streetscape and façade programs can be undertaken to enhance the visual character of individual corridors. Where possible, conduits should be installed during streetscape enhancement projects to allow for the future placement of utilities underground. Gateway enhancements can help to create an identity or promote the existing character of corridors.

Transportation modes such as walking (via safe and attractive sidewalks), bicycling, and transit should be encouraged. Parking management systems including the introduction of off-street parking should be considered along busier corridors such as Route 110 (New York Avenue) in the Huntington Station area and individual curb cuts limited.

Minor Commercial Corridors Goals:

1. Maintain and improve economic viability, visual character, and traffic flow along minor commercial corridors.
2. Protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.
3. Promote redevelopment of obsolescent or under-utilized properties to meet Comprehensive Plan objectives.

Strategies

1. **Zoning:** Change existing zoning to better “fit” land use character and to promote quality, compatible development along commercial corridors.
 - Review existing C-6 and other commercial zoning on a corridor-by-corridor basis and revise as appropriate to match local conditions (e.g., neighborhood business to replace C-6 zoning along New York Avenue between Huntington Village and Halesite).
 - As part of the review, consider the selective introduction of small scale professional office, residential, and mixed uses into the commercial land use pattern.
 - Require conditional use permits for commercial buildings above 5,000 square feet in size in neighborhood-level business zones.
 - Prohibit visible parking beneath buildings (i.e., require to be buried below grade).
 - Protect industrial areas from being entirely zoned out or replaced by commercial uses.
 - Adopt a corridor overlay district that can be implemented on a corridor-by-corridor basis to improve visual character and prevent proliferation of automobile-dominated uses as development occurs over time, including design standards addressing the following:
 - Access management.
 - Landscape/streetscape/sidewalks.
 - Build-to lines.
 - Building mass, scale, façade design.
 - Buffer/transition requirements next to residential uses.
 - Signage.

2. Physical Improvements: Improve the visual character of commercial corridors.

- Implement a façade and signage improvement program for selected commercial corridors, possibly drawing on CDBG funding.
- Develop a phased program of visual improvements (streetscape, sidewalks, etc.) to key commercial corridors and gateways, coordinated with overlay design standards for private developments.
- Develop and implement corridor stormwater management programs, including sustainable stormwater management practices.
- Install underground conduits in development/construction projects along selected corridors to allow for future burying of overhead utilities.

3. Parking: Monitor parking issues and needs along commercial corridors and implement strategies as necessary to address them.

- › Address New York Avenue between Huntington Station and Jericho Turnpike as a priority.
- Evaluate the impacts of on-street parking on traffic flow.
- Consider the need for shared or public parking to serve local business needs.
- Monitor parking needs along other commercial corridors, especially near restaurant clusters.
- Implement town-wide parking strategies (evaluation of existing off-street parking standards, shared parking credits, etc.).

4. Mobility: Address traffic congestion.

- Apply access management strategies (driveway control, consolidated curb cuts, cross connections between properties, etc.).
- Promote alternative means of transportation (transit, pedestrian, and bicycle).
- Coordinate traffic signal timing and location along corridors with congestion problems.
- Identify and implement other improvements to congestion and safety “hot spots.”

11

implementation

11.1 Overview

**11.2 Principles for Comprehensive Plan
Consistency**

11.3 Action Plan

11.4 Plan Monitoring

11.1 Overview

Plans are turned into reality by taking action. The Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a working document that will guide town leaders in making decisions, establishing priorities, and committing to actions that will positively shape the future of Huntington. Effective implementation will require that the town administration, departments, and present and future Town Boards actively and continuously use the Comprehensive Plan as a key reference for decision-making, consistent with the plan vision, goals, policies, and strategies. The Plan's value will be realized to the extent that it is followed and implemented through actions such as revising the Town's zoning and development regulations and supporting transportation improvements.

The plan elements (Chapters 3 to 10) define a broad range of policies and strategies designed to realize the Vision Statement presented in Chapter 2. This chapter lays out a program for implementation of the policies and strategies consisting of three components:

1. **Principles** to guide decision-making for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan (Section 11.2).
2. An **Action Plan** that synthesizes the policies and strategies from the plan elements into short-term, mid-term, long-term, and ongoing actions (Section 11.3).
3. A protocol to **monitor progress** in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, including annual reviews and periodic updates to the Plan (Section 11.4).

11.2 Principles for Comprehensive Plan Consistency

Town comprehensive planning in New York is enabled by Article 16, § 272-a of New York State Town law. This statute recognizes the importance of comprehensive planning as follows:

Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens...The development and enactment by the town government of a town comprehensive plan which can be readily identified, and is available for use by the public, is in the best interest of the people of each town...

The statute encourages, but does not require, towns to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. However, the "effect of adoption" of the comprehensive plan is that "all town land use regulations must be in accordance" with the plan. In addition, "all plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the comprehensive plan...shall take such plan into consideration."

The Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan replaces and updates Huntington's most recent comprehensive plan, which was adopted in 1993. If it is to effectively guide change in Huntington over the next decade and beyond, a framework must be established to provide reasonable assurance that the Plan will be followed. Therefore, the following three principles shall be followed by the Town to promote consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

Principle #1: Zoning and related development regulations shall be revised to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Land Use and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan element propose revisions to the present zoning and development regulations in order to achieve objectives such as protecting the character of neighborhoods and hamlet centers and improving development quality along commercial corridors. This principle does not suggest that, upon plan adoption, the zoning map and zoning districts must undergo a wholesale revision. Rather, it calls for the Town to implement a staged program over time to bring its zoning and development regulations into alignment with the Comprehensive Plan policies and strategies. Priorities and timeframes for regulatory changes are provided in Table 11.1.

Principle #2: Rezoning requests shall be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and shall not be approved if found contrary to the Comprehensive Plan.

High numbers of rezoning and variance requests lend uncertainty to the development process and reflect the need to more clearly define expectations and standards for development in the Town's ordinances. To provide a greater degree of certainty and direction to the development process, the goals, policies, and strategies contained in the Land Use and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan should be used in concert with the Future Land Use Map to evaluate all requests

for rezoning. Proposed developments or uses that can clearly be demonstrated to support implementation of the Comprehensive Plan should be considered for approval. Conversely, approvals should not be granted for proposed developments or uses that are found to be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan unless the Comprehensive Plan can be amended based on findings of fact (e.g., new information or other changed circumstances that can clearly be demonstrated to warrant modification to the Generalized Future Land Use Map). Clear, objective criteria should be developed for use both in evaluating rezonings and considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan (see Principle #3).

Principle #3: The Town Board shall consider consistency with the Comprehensive Plan as a factor in making decisions on proposed programs, projects, and initiatives.

The Huntington Town Board often makes decisions on many programs and projects that relate to the goals, policies, and action strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Effective implementation of the Plan will depend in part on the extent to which this and future Boards takes into account consistency with the Comprehensive Plan in the decision-making process. To support this principle, a protocol should be established for reporting by town staff to the Town Board on the consistency of relevant projects, programs, and initiatives with the Comprehensive Plan.

The following are the recommended components of a more specific protocol for ensuring Comprehensive Plan consistency:

- Identify specific task schedules, resources, and responsibilities for revising the Zoning Ordinance and related development standards to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, in accordance with the timeframes and priorities established by Table 11.1.
- Define objective criteria to be used in reviewing rezonings and other significant development applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Establish a framework for reporting to the Town Board by staff regarding the consistency of relevant projects, programs, and initiatives with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Institute provisions to modify the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process to reflect policies, strategies, and priorities established in the Comprehensive Plan.

This protocol should be developed and established within one year of adoption of the Plan.

11.3 Action Plan

Table 11.1 synthesizes the strategies contained in the plan elements into a list of actions. Five general action types are included, defined as follows:

- **Capital:** Involves capital investment by the Town.
- **Outreach:** Involves outreach to the public.
- **Partnership:** Involves partnerships with one or more entities to implement the policy or action strategy.
- **Planning:** Involves additional planning or study to address specific issues.
- **Regulation:** Involves development of new regulations, revisions to existing regulations, or enhanced code enforcement.

The actions are organized according to Comprehensive Plan element. References to relevant strategies from the elements are provided for each action. The actions are assigned to one of four timeframes:

- **Short-term:** The Town should address within 0-2 years from plan adoption.
- **Mid-term:** The Town should commit to addressing within the range of 2-5 years from plan adoption.
- **Long-term:** The Town should have as a goal to address within five years from plan adoption or thereafter.
- **Ongoing:** The Town is currently addressing and/or should address on a continuing basis.

Some of the ongoing actions are enhancements to or continuations of current town programs (e.g., “Take Back The Block” and the Economic Development Corporation’s

Huntington Station Revitalization Program). Others are relatively new initiatives that should be incorporated into town programs and guide the decision-making process (e.g., using green building techniques in the design and construction of municipal facilities). Still others are new or enhanced partnerships with other entities that will implement Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives over time (e.g., working with private landowners and land conservation organizations to protect privately owned open space).

A number of the strategies from the plan elements are not included in Table 11-1 because they provide long-term policy guidance for decision-making rather than discrete implementation actions. Examples include:

A.5.3 Promote protection of native species and prevention/removal of invasive species.

C.5.3 Ensure that community facilities are readily accessible to persons with disabilities.

D.4.2 Maintain residential zoning along residential arterial roadways.

E.4.4 Identify opportunities to accommodate community-based businesses and entrepreneurs in revitalization activities (e.g., Huntington Station).

F.2.2 Manage access along arterial roadways to reduce congestion and increase safety.

G.3.1 Consistent with the Principles of Smart Growth and Livability approved by the Town Board, permit development of smaller dwelling units in compact, mixed-use settings that will not adversely impact stable neighborhoods.

These and other strategies not included in Table 11-1 should be referred to and used in

planning and decision-making on relevant town programs, projects, initiatives, and development approvals.

The schedule of actions presented in Table 11.1 is complex and will take many years to complete. To “jumpstart” the implementation process, the following “early actions” are proposed corresponding to the six key initiatives identified as priorities in Chapter 2:

1. Traffic Circulation

Implement a comprehensive program through the Department of Transportation to address traffic congestion in the Town of Huntington, beginning with development of a Long-Range Transportation Master Plan. (Relevant Actions: F.1, F.2, F.3, F.5)

2. Open Space Preservation

Expand the Town’s open space acquisition and protection program. (Relevant Actions: A.11, A.12, A.13)

3. Housing

Expand efforts to diversify Huntington’s housing stock to meet the diverse needs of town residents. (Relevant Actions: G.3, G.5, G.6)

4. Development Quality

Revise the zoning regulations and development standards to protect and reinforce the unique character of Huntington’s neighborhoods and hamlet centers. (Relevant Actions: D.1, D.2, D.3)

5. Commercial Corridors

Revise the zoning regulations and development standards to improve the character and

viability of development and redevelopment along Huntington’s commercial corridors. (Relevant Action Initiatives: D.3, D.4)

6. Sustainable Huntington

Define the parameters of and work program for a Sustainable Huntington Initiative. (Relevant Action Initiative: A.10)

11.4 Plan Monitoring

If the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan is to have value and remain useful over time, it is important to develop ways to monitor progress in achieving the many initiatives it calls for, measure its success in bringing about positive change, and keep it current as circumstances change and new information comes available. For this reason, the Comprehensive Plan should be thought of not as a static document fixed in time, but rather as a continuing process and the foundation that can guide and inform ongoing, more detailed planning and implementation. A formal procedure to monitor progress in implementing the plan policies and action strategies should be established to include, at a minimum, annual reviews and periodic updates (generally in five-year increments). The following checklist is recommended to guide development of a procedure for Comprehensive Plan monitoring and updating:

Annual Monitoring

- On an annual basis, the Planning Board should submit a report to the Town Board on the Comprehensive Plan, indicating actions taken and progress made during the previous year and defining a work program for implementing the Plan over the next year.
- Annual review of the Comprehensive Plan should be coordinated with the capital improvement programming process to ensure that the Town's CIP reflects priorities for major public investments set by the Action Plan.
- **Measures of success** should be developed as part of an overall plan-monitoring program, to be used in evaluating the effectiveness of implementation efforts and degree of

adherence to the Comprehensive Plan. These measures include:

- › **Timeframes for completion of specific actions.** Table 11.1 sets a framework of short, mid, and long-term timeframes within which individual actions are to be carried out. More specific priorities, tasks, timeframes, and resource commitments should be established as an early implementation action and reviewed and updated in the annual progress reviews.
- › **Numeric indicators to be used to measure progress in achieving plan goals, policies, and strategies.** Indicators are used in community planning projects to measure whether or not the outcomes desired by the community are being achieved. As an example, open space acreage protected, transit ridership, and workforce housing units constructed could be used as indicators of progress in achieving environmental resources and open space, transportation, and housing goals, respectively. Indicators are commonly used in "sustainable community" initiatives around the country to monitor progress in achieving defined goals and objectives. As an early implementation action, it is recommended that the Town define indicators as part of the "Sustainable Huntington" initiative (Action A.2 in Table 11.1). The indicators can be then be incorporated into the annual progress reports on the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Dialogue** should be maintained with local citizens, civic groups, school districts, municipalities, development interests, and other stakeholders and affected parties on a periodic, ongoing basis to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan.

Updating

Over ten years elapsed between adoption of Huntington's previous Comprehensive Plan and initiation of work on the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Ideally, updates should be initiated on a five-year basis. The process of plan monitoring and annual reviews outlined above will reduce the level of effort required to undertake future updates. The update process should include the following:

- **Citizen input** to ascertain updated needs, priorities, and aspirations for the future.
- Creation of a **Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee** or other working group to guide the update process.
- **Analysis of conditions and trends** related to development, transportation, open space, and other factors since adoption of the Horizons 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Preparation of a **Comprehensive Plan Evaluation Report** that analyzes the effectiveness of actions taken to implement the plan, identifies opportunities and constraints to implementation, and summarizes trends and challenges that have emerged or changed in the period since plan adoption.
- **Revisions to the goals, policies, action strategies, and action plan** to address changing circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and expressed citizen priorities.

Table 11.1 Action Schedule

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame	
A Environmental Resources and Open Space				
A.1	Review development regulations for opportunities to strengthen protection of environmentally sensitive resources.	Regulation	A.1.1-7, A.2.6, A.4.1, A.4.2	Medium
A.2	Develop and implement a stormwater management “best practices” program.	Regulation	A.2.3	Short
A.3	Work with Suffolk County Department of Health Services to address/improve on-lot sewage disposal.	Partnership	A.2.4, A.2.5	Ongoing
A.4	Initiate a comprehensive brownfields reclamation program.	Planning	A.2.7	Short
A.5	Implement the Huntington Harbor and Unincorporated Areas Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP).	Planning	A.2.8, A.3.1, A.13.2, E.6.1	Ongoing
A.6	Work with partners to upgrade current levels of sewage treatment and increase Huntington’s sewage treatment capacity.	Partnership	A.2.9	Ongoing
A.7	Establish a “Green Huntington” tree management and planting program.	Capital/ Outreach	A.4.3, B.6.6	Short
A.8	Update the Town’s Open Areas Information System (OASIS), including a town-wide biodiversity inventory.	Planning	A.5.1	Short
A.9	Initiate a public awareness program on environmental resources.	Outreach	A.6.1, A.6.4, A.6.5	Medium
A.10	Create a Sustainable Huntington initiative.	Outreach	A.6.2, A.6.3	Short
A.11	Expand the Environmental Open Space and Park Fund (EOSPA) acquisition program.	Capital	A.5.2, A.7.1-5, B.4.7	Short
A.12	Explore the feasibility of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.	Capital	A.7.6	Short
A.13	Review development regulations for opportunities to promote open space dedication.	Regulation	A.8.1, A.8.2	Short

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
A.14 Work with private landowners and land conservation organizations to protect privately owned open space.	Partnership	A.9.1, A.9.6	Ongoing
A.15 Implement a Transfer of Density Flow Rights (TDFR) Program Regulation A.9.2.	Regulation	A.9.2	Ongoing
A.16 Investigate use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR).	Regulation	A.9.3, A.9.4	Short
A.17 Evaluate properties owned by the Town and other public agencies for opportunities to dedicate open space.	Partnership	A.9.5	Ongoing
A.18 Develop management plans for public parks and open spaces.	Planning	A.10.1, A.10.5	Medium
A.19 Develop a public awareness program to promote use and care of Huntington's parks.	Outreach	A.10.2	Medium
A.20 Establish new open space/recreational and institutional zoning districts.	Regulation	A.10.3, D.6.6	Medium
A.21 Conduct a parkland encroachment Study.	Planning	A.10.4	Medium
A.22 Prepare a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan to update the 1988 Parks and Recreation Study.	Planning	A.11.1–4, A.12.1–5, A.13.1, A.14.1– 3, F.4.1, F.4.2	Medium
B Community Character			
B.1 Review development regulations for opportunities to strengthen protection and support compatible reuse of historic resources.	Regulation	B.1.1–2, B.1.7, B.1.8	Medium
B.2 Update the Town's historic resource inventory.	Planning	B.1.3	Short
B.3 Strengthen/enhance public awareness programs on historic resources.	Outreach	B.1.5	Ongoing
B.4 Support efforts to provide community groups with adequate facilities for the performing arts.	Partnership	B.2.1–4	Ongoing

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
B.5 Coordinate planning initiatives with the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area Management Plan.	Planning	B.3, E.6.2	Ongoing
B.6 Continue to make visual improvements to gateways and other highly visible locations.	Capital	B.4.1	Ongoing
B.7 Establish design standards for public improvement projects.	Planning	B.4.2, C.7.1	Medium
B.8 Implement public street tree standards.	Planning	B.4.3	Short
B.9 Upgrade municipal street lights/outdoor lighting.	Capital	B.4.4	Medium
B.10 Create a “percent for art” program on town capital improvements.	Capital	B.4.5	Medium
B.11 Enact design standards for commercial and other larger scale new development.	Regulation	B.5.1, D.2.1, D.6.1	Short
B.12 Continue to increase code enforcement to address visually blighted properties, illegal signage, etc.	Regulation	B.6.2, B.6.7	Ongoing
B.13 Work with the Long Island Power Authority to prepare for the removal of overhead utilities in selected locations (e.g., village centers).	Partnership	B.6.3	Long

C Community Facilities

C.1 Continue collaborative efforts involving the Town and local school districts.	Partnership	C.1.1, G.5.5	Ongoing
C.2 Upgrade the Department of Planning and Environment’s demographic analysis capability	Planning	C.1.1, G.5.1, G.5.2	Medium
C.3 Conduct outreach to service providers to promote community facility planning and address common issues.	Partnership	C.1.2, C.1.5–6, C.3.1–4, C.4.1–4, C.5.4, C-3	Ongoing
C.4 Prepare a Municipal Facilities Master Plan.	Planning	C.1.3–4, C.6.1-3	Medium

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
C.5 Support regional and state initiatives to address escalating school costs, including legislation to assist school districts that accept workforce housing.	Partnership	C.2.2, E.3.1, E.3.3, G.5.3	Ongoing
C.6 Identify regulatory approaches to providing for community facility needs in new developments.	Regulation	C.2.1, C.2.3–4, G.5.5	Medium
C.7 Use green building techniques in the design and construction of municipal facilities.	Capital	C.6.4	Ongoing

D Land Use

D.1 Enact neighborhood protection regulations and standards.	Regulation	D.1.1, D.1.2	Short
D.2 Develop model hamlet center zoning including infill design standards.	Regulation	D.1.2–3, D.6.3	Short
D.3 Replace the C-6 General Business District.	Regulation	D.1.3, B.5.2, E.22	Short
D.4 Enact design standards for commercial corridors.	Regulation	D.2.1, D.2.5, D.3.4	Short
D.5 Develop an integrated land use/infrastructure plan for Melville.	Planning	D.2.2, E.1.1, F.2.6	Medium
D.6 Modify zoning regulations and design standards to implement the Melville land use/infrastructure plan.	Regulation	D.2.2, E.1.1, F.2.6	Long
D.7 Define a phased program of transportation improvements as part of implementation of the Melville land use/infrastructure plan.	Capital	D.2.2, F.2.6	Long
D.8 Establish public sewer capacity to serve future development consistent with the Melville land use/infrastructure plan.	Capital	D.2.2, E.1.1	Long
D.9 Enact regulations to promote a new pattern of development along Jericho Turnpike focusing on development nodes.	Regulation	D.2.3	Medium
D.10 Establish guidelines for the expansion of the Walt Whitman Mall.	Regulation	D.2.4	Short

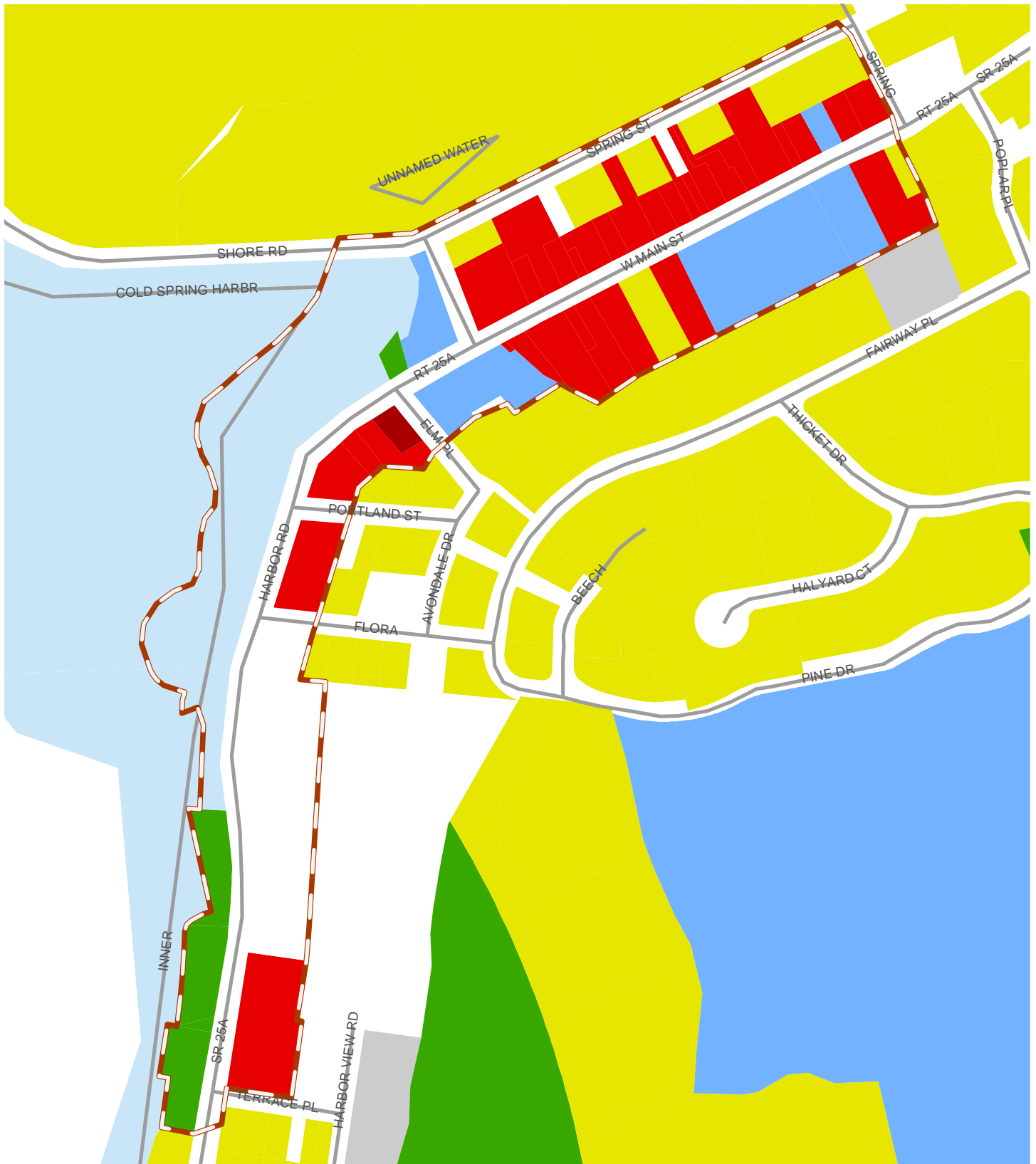
Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
D.11 Implement targeted façade improvement/signage replacement programs.	Capital	D.2.5, D.3.6	Medium
D.12 Prepare and implement a Route 25A Corridor Improvement Plan.	Planning	D.3.2	Long
D.13 Evaluate use standards for residential arterial roadways.	Regulation	D.4.4	Medium
D.14 Evaluate the Town's industrial zoning districts, permitted uses, and standards.	Regulation	D.5.1–3, E.1.	Medium
D.15 Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of and revision to existing zoning within the Town's commercial districts.	Regulation	D.6.2	Medium
D.16 Consolidate/eliminate unnecessary or duplicative zoning districts.	Regulation	D.6.5	Medium
D.17 Revise the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the need for rezonings and variances.	Regulation	D.6.6	Medium
D.18 Incorporate green building and sustainable site development provisions and incentives into the Town Code.	Regulation	D.G.8, F.6.4	Short
D.19 Pursue joint planning with adjacent municipalities in areas of regional significance (Route 110 Corridor, Sagtikos Regional Development Zone).	Partnership	D.7.1–4	Ongoing
E Economic Development			
E.1 Provide targeted financial assistance, incentives, and technical support to encourage reinvestment in older commercial properties.	Capital/ Partnership	E.2.3	Ongoing
E.2 Establish regulatory provisions to make it easier to start a business, including home occupation/"live-work" regulations.	Regulation	E.4.1, D.4.3	Medium
E.3 Develop and maintain an up-to-date inventory of properties available for businesses with local realtors.	Planning/ Partnership	E.4.2	Long

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
E.4 Continue progress in revitalizing Huntington Station.	Capital	E.5.1	Ongoing
E.5 Support the Route 110 Partnership's Route 110 economic development revitalization initiative.	Partnership	E.5.2	Ongoing
F Transportation			
F.1 Develop coordinated traffic signals with NYSDOT and Suffolk County.	Capital/ Partnership	F.1.1–2	Medium
F.2 Develop a Long-Range Transportation Plan to coordinate capital improvements to local, county, and state roads.	Planning	F.1.5–6	Short
F.3 Consider a bond referendum and/or other funding source to support priority improvements identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan.	Capital	F.1.5	Medium
F.4 Initiate Transportation Demand Management programs with transportation providers and major employers.	Partnership	F.1.9	Medium
F.5 Explore regulatory approaches to addressing the traffic impacts of new developments.	Regulation	F.2.3–4	Short
F.6 Develop a program to address neighborhood cut-through traffic.	Planning/ Capital	F.2.5	Medium
F.7 Work with HART, Suffolk County Transit, and LIRR to improve transit service in Huntington.	Partnership	F.3.1–5	Ongoing
F.8 Develop and implement a plan for a town-wide pedestrian network.	Planning / Capital	F.4.2, A.13.1	Medium
F.9 Develop and implement a plan for a town-wide bikeway system.	Planning / Capital	F.4.2, A.13.1	Medium
F.10 Develop a parking management plan for Huntington Village.	Planning	F.5.1	Medium

Action	Type	Relevant Strategies	Time-frame
F.11 Evaluate parking needs in hamlet centers.	Planning	F.5.1	Medium
F.12 Review off-street parking standards.	Regulation	F.5.2	Short
F.13 Incorporate alternative fuel vehicles into the town fleet.	Capital	F.6.3	Ongoing
G Housing			
G.1 Increase enforcement to eliminate illegal, unsafe housing units.	Regulation	G.1.1	Ongoing
G.2 Expand the Take Back The Block Program.	Capital	G.1.2	Ongoing
G.3 Enhance the Accessory Apartment program.	Regulation	G.1.3	Short
G.4 Assist persons displaced from illegal units in securing replacement housing.	Capital	G.1.4	Ongoing
G.5 Strengthen regulations requiring affordable housing in rezonings.	Regulation	G.2.1	Short
G.6 Identify opportunities for workforce and alternative housing.	Planning/ Partnership	G.2.2, E.3.2	Ongoing
G.7 Implement guidelines and standards to ensure the quality of workforce housing.	Planning Regulation	G.2.3, G.2.4, G.3.2	Ongoing
G.8 Provide assistance for first-time homebuyers.	Capital	G.2.5	Ongoing
G.9 Establish/enforce provisions to maintain the affordability of dedicated workforce housing over time.	Regulation	G.2.6	Medium
G.10 Initiate a public education program on the need for, benefits, and impacts of a diversified housing stock.	Outreach	G.2.7	Short
G.11 Designate an Affordable Housing Coordinator.	Outreach	G.2.9	Short

appendix

Geographic Focal Area Maps



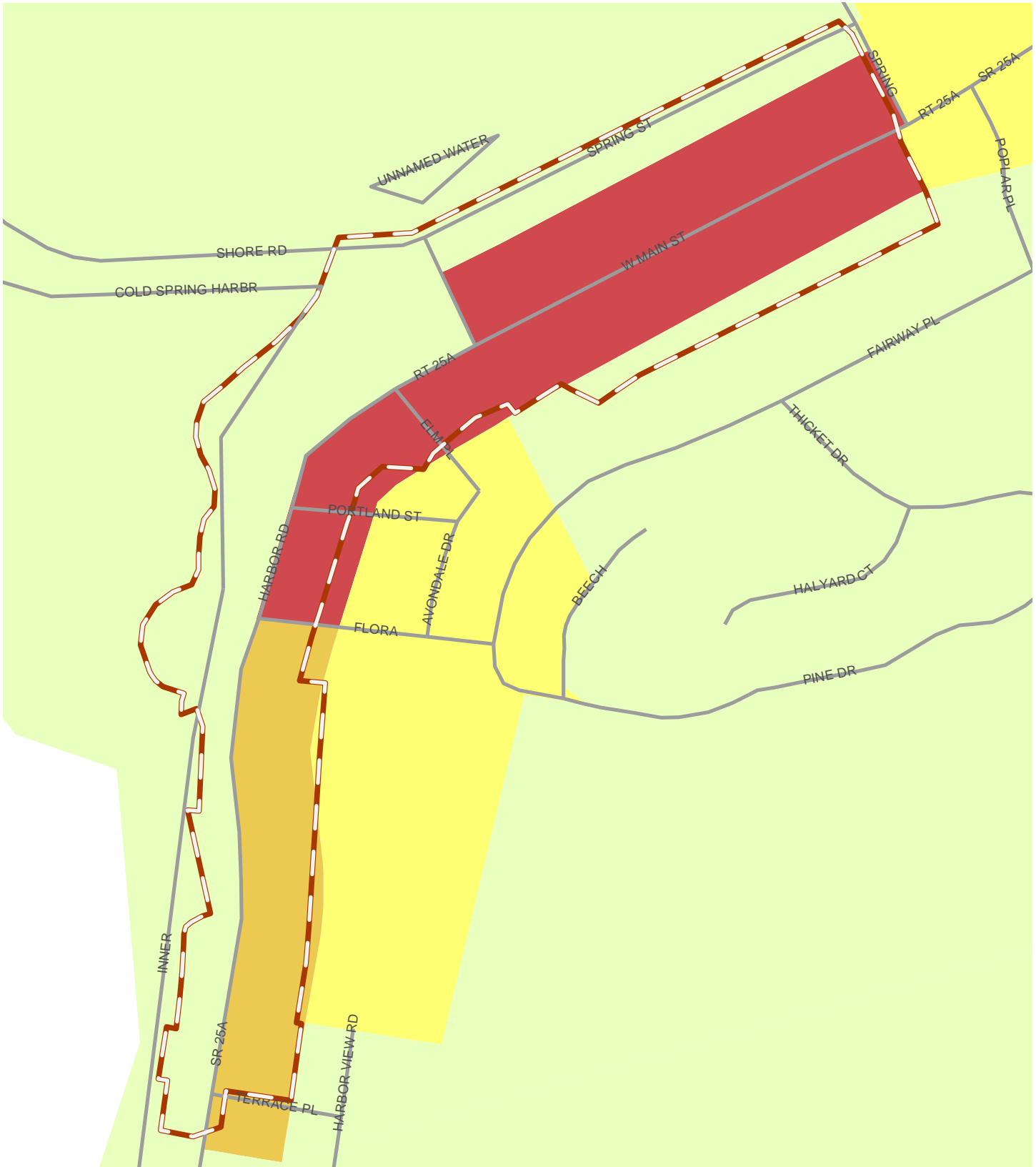
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.1
Cold Spring Harbor
Geographic Focal Areas



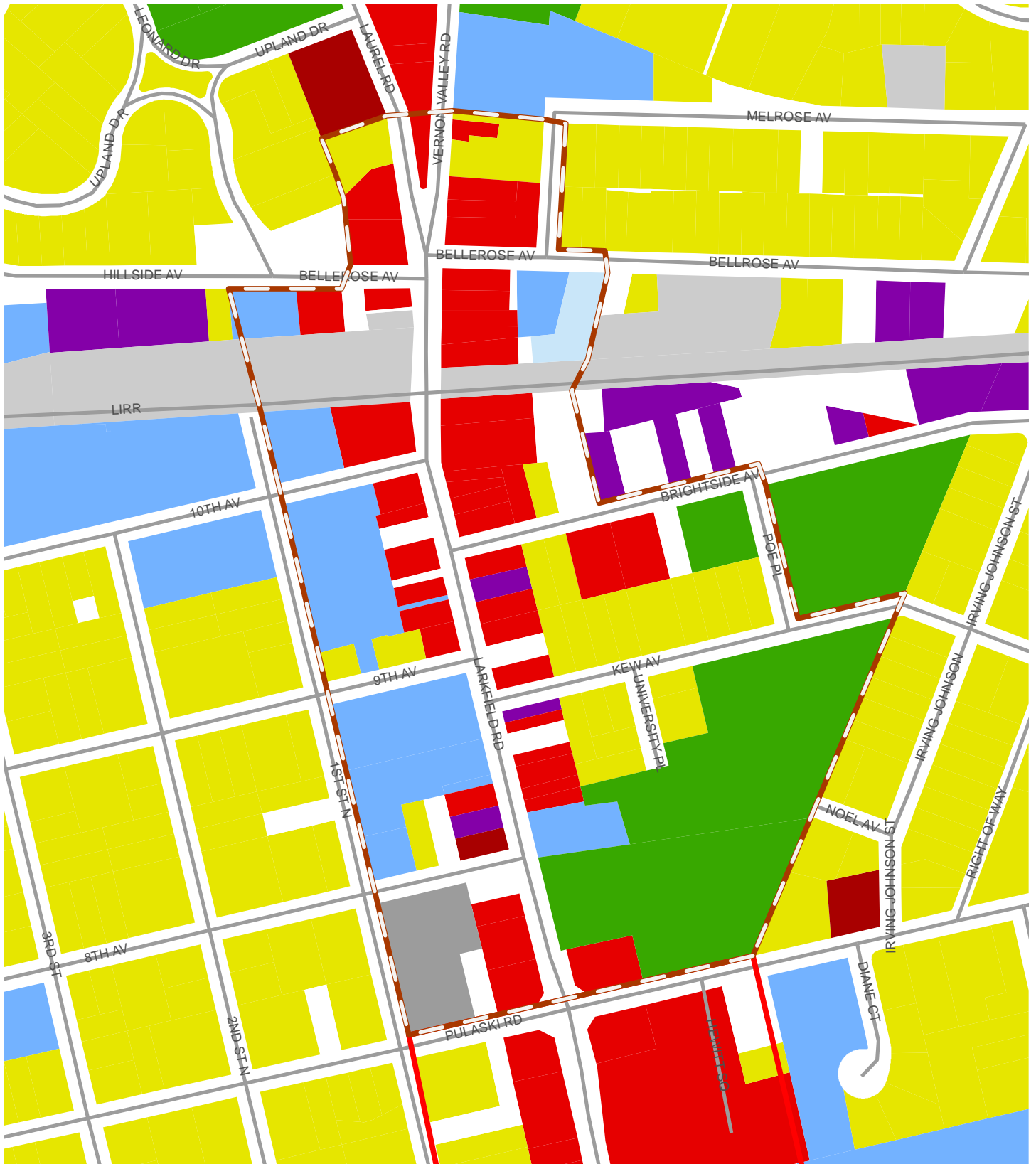


Generalized Existing Zoning

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Office | Medium Density Residential | |
| Commercial | High Density Residential | |
| C6 Overlay | Planned Residential District | |
| Light Industrial | Residential Retirement Community | |
| General Industrial | Residential Medical Services | |
| Low Density Residential | Incorporated Villages | |
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.2
Cold Spring Harbor
Geographic Focal Areas





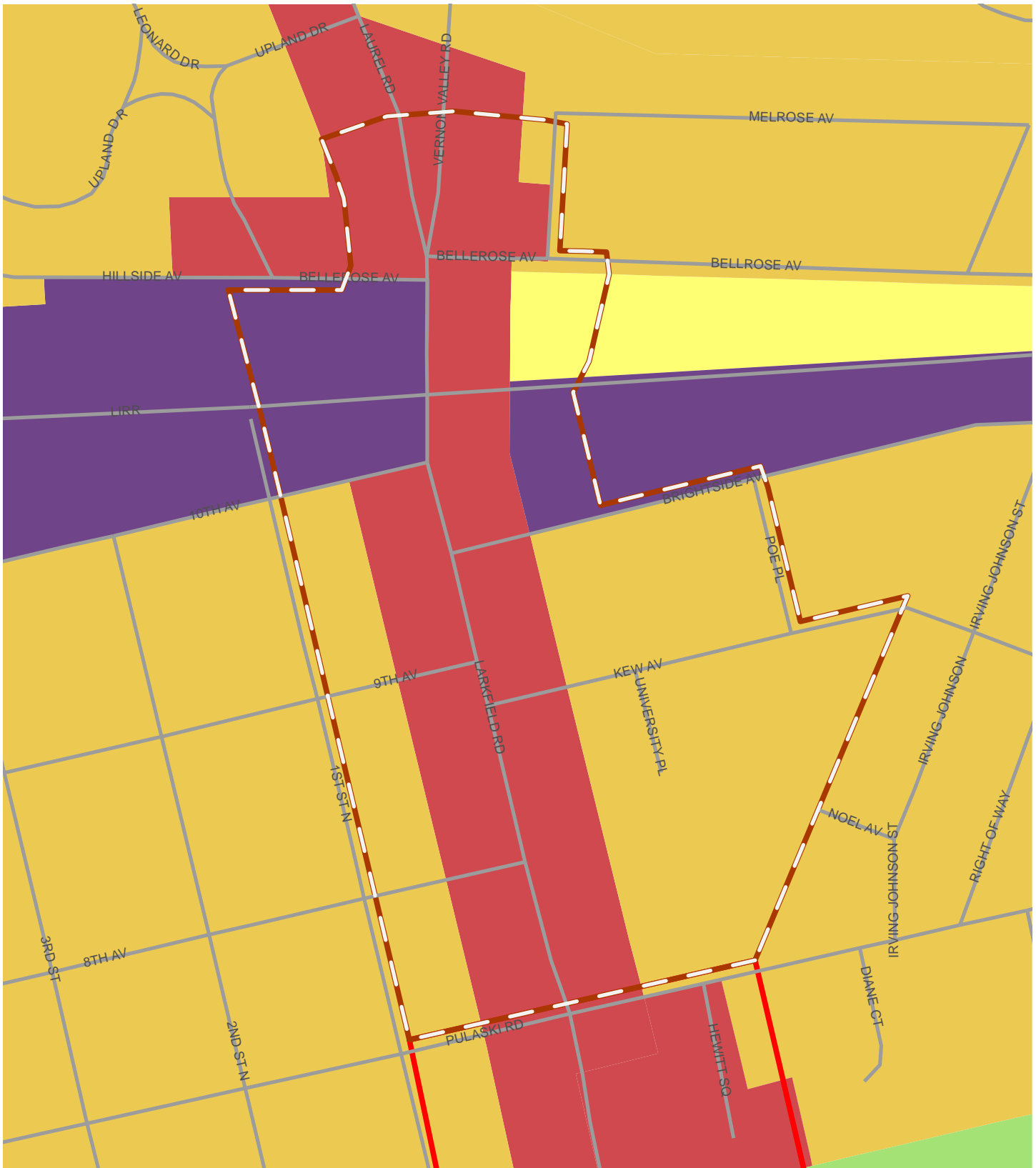
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.3
East Northport
Geographic Focal Areas





Generalized Existing Zoning

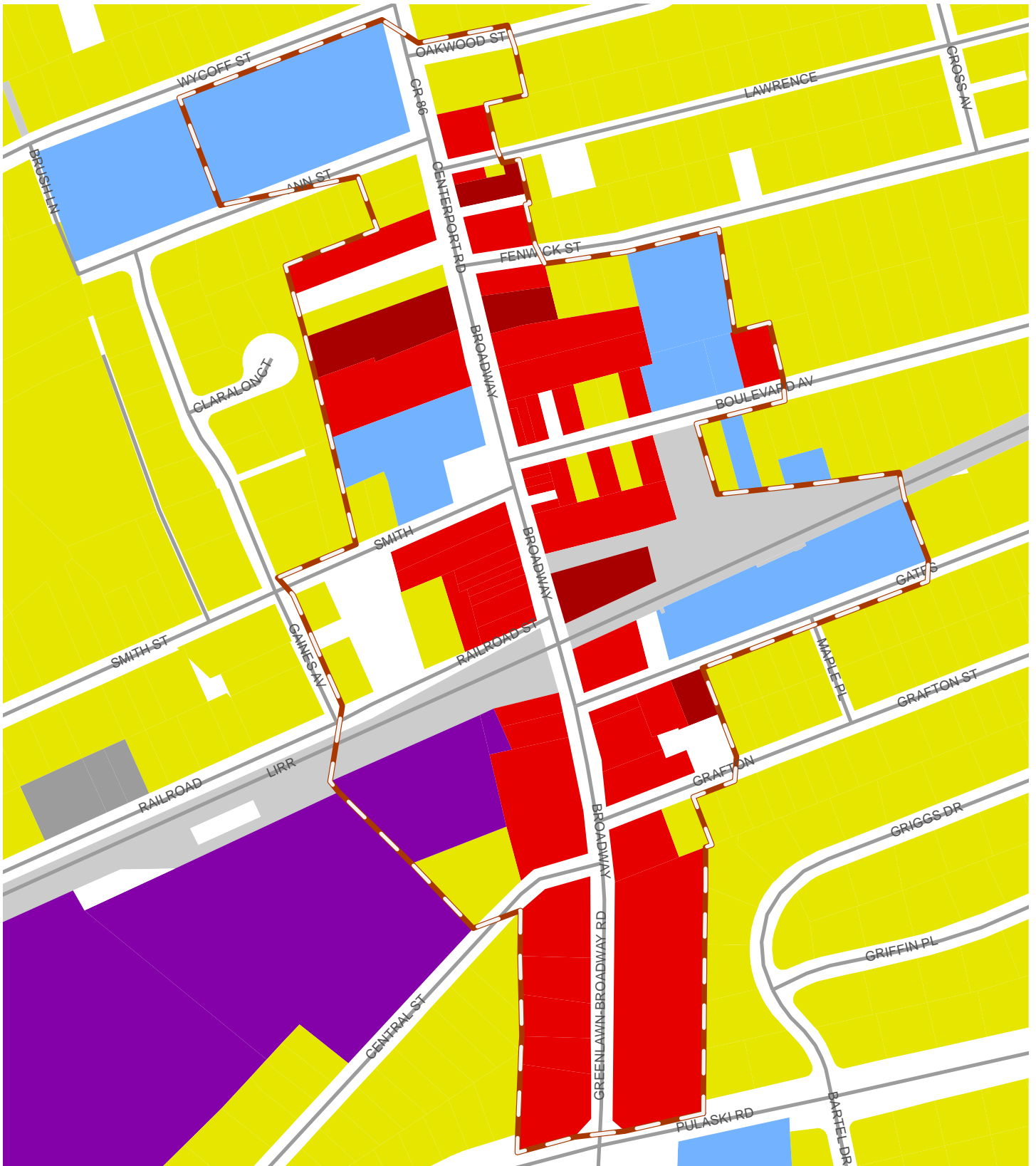
- Office
- Commercial
- C6 Overlay
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Planned Residential District
- Residential Retirement Community
- Residential Medical Services
- Incorporated Villages

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.4
East Northport
Geographic Focal Areas



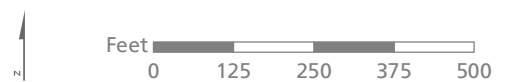


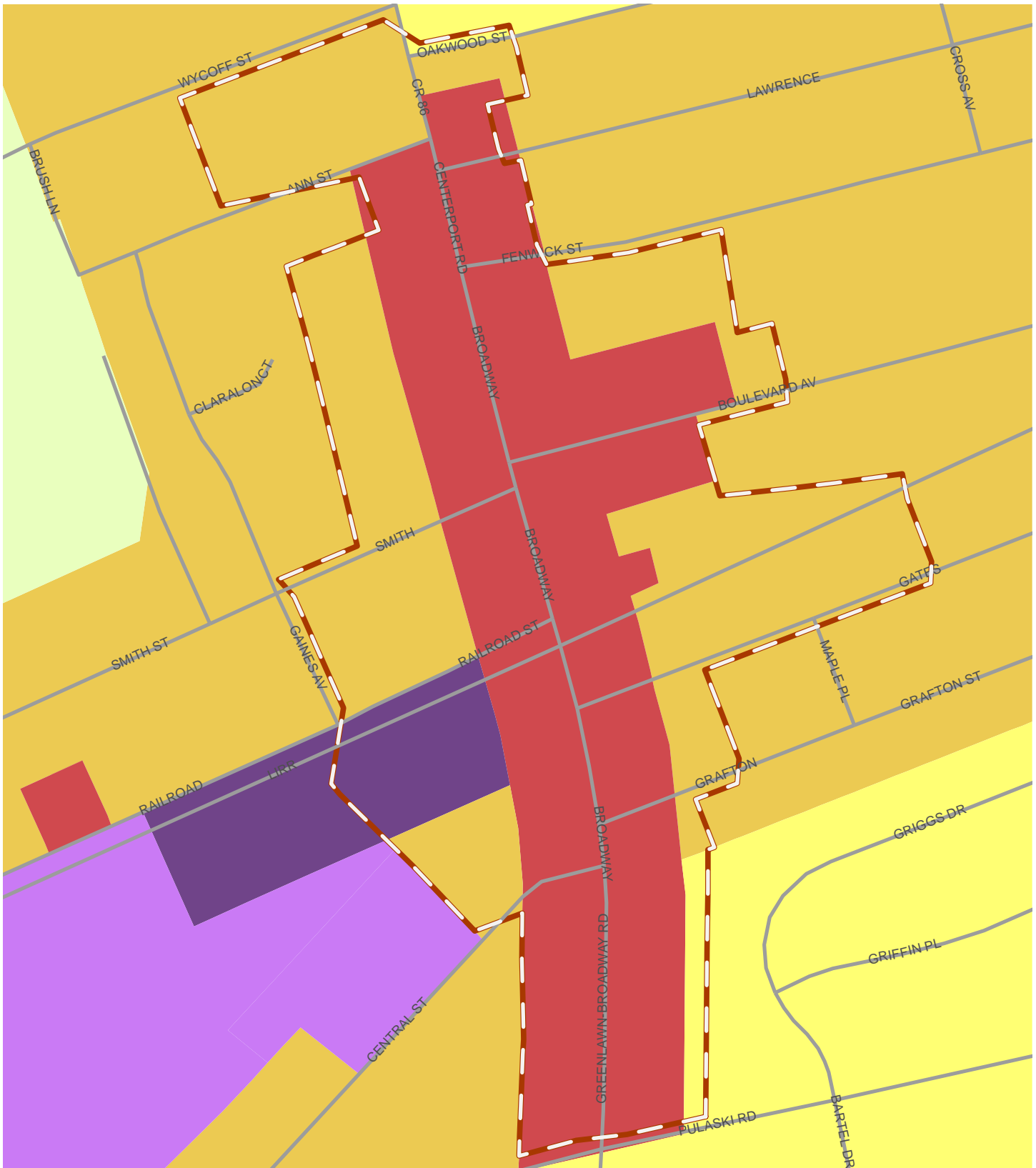
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.5
Greenlawn
Geographic Focal Areas



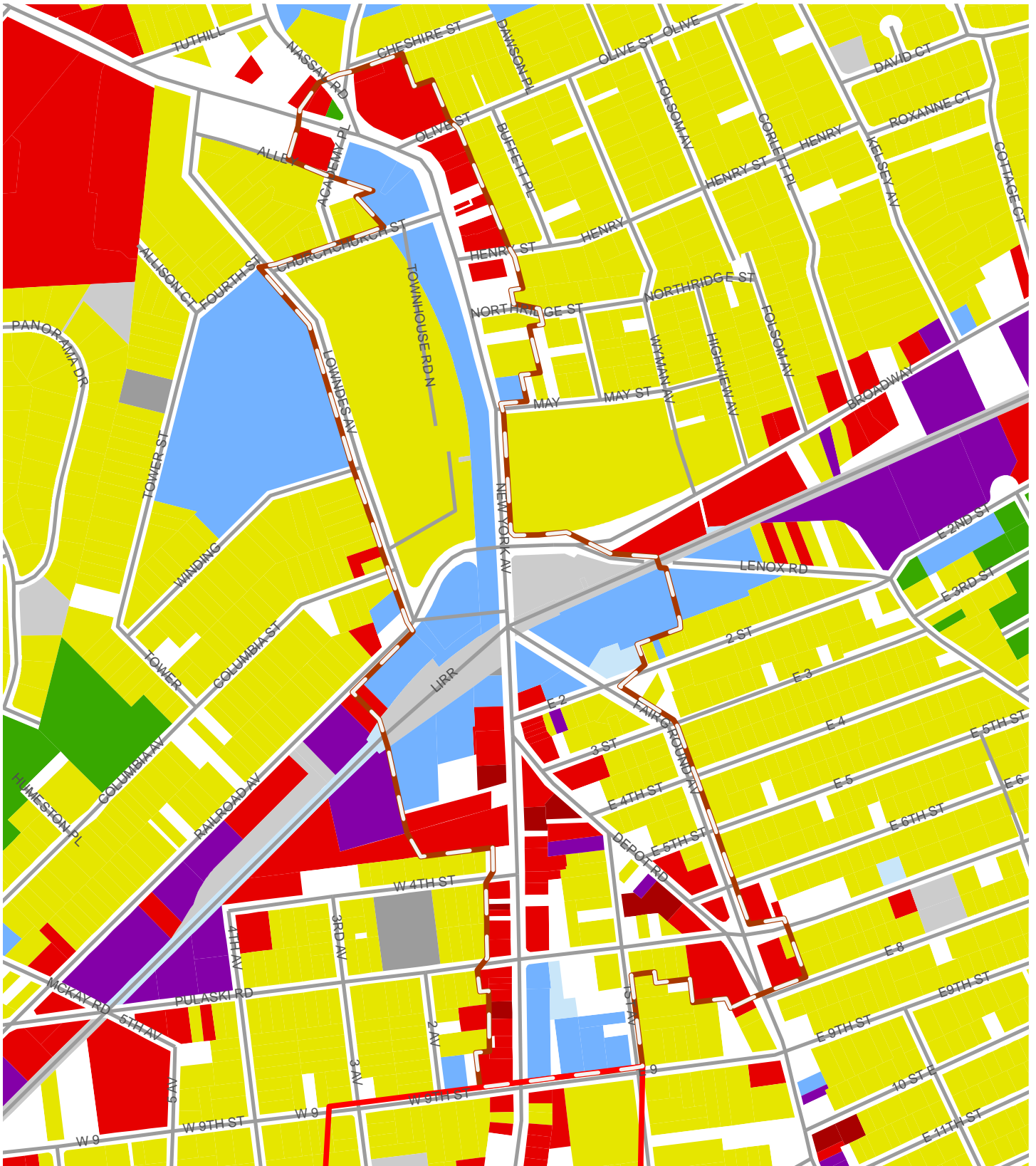


Generalized Existing Zoning

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| ■ Office | ■ Medium Density Residential | Nodes and Corridors |
| ■ Commercial | ■ High Density Residential | Hamlet Centers |
| ■ C6 Overlay | ■ Planned Residential District | |
| ■ Light Industrial | ■ Residential Retirement Community | |
| ■ General Industrial | ■ Residential Medical Services | |
| ■ Low Density Residential | ■ Incorporated Villages | |
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.6
Greenlawn
Geographic Focal Areas



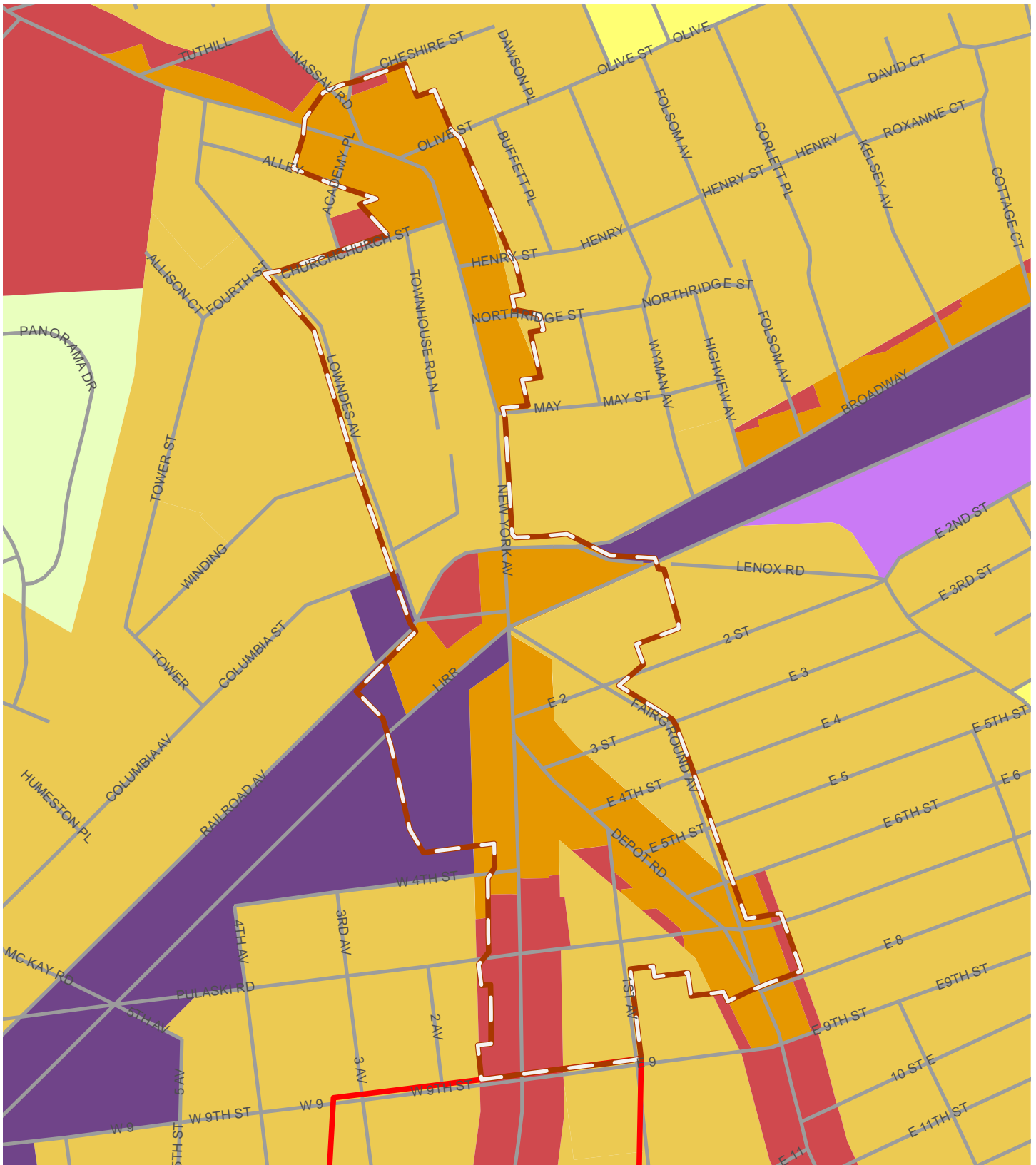


Existing Land Use

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Water | Office | Nodes and Corridors |
| Agriculture | Recreation & Open Space | Hamlet Centers |
| Residential | Institutional | |
| Vacant | Transportation | |
| Commercial | Utilities | |
| Industrial | Waste Handling & Management | |
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.7
Huntington Station
Geographic Focal Areas





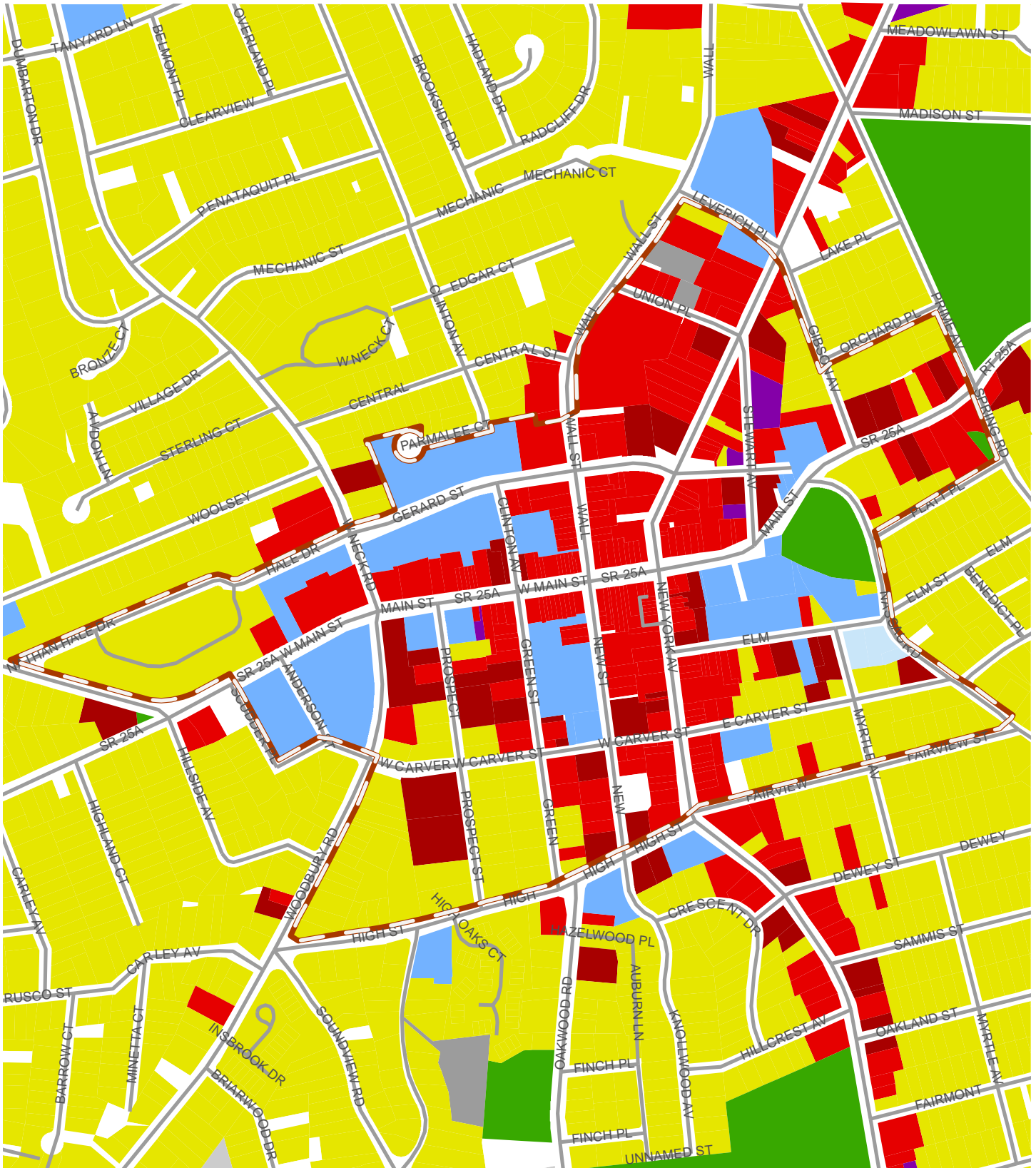
Generalized Existing Zoning

- Office
 - Commercial
 - C6 Overlay
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Planned Residential District
 - Residential Retirement Community
 - Residential Medical Services
 - Incorporated Villages
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.8
Huntington Station
Geographic Focal Areas



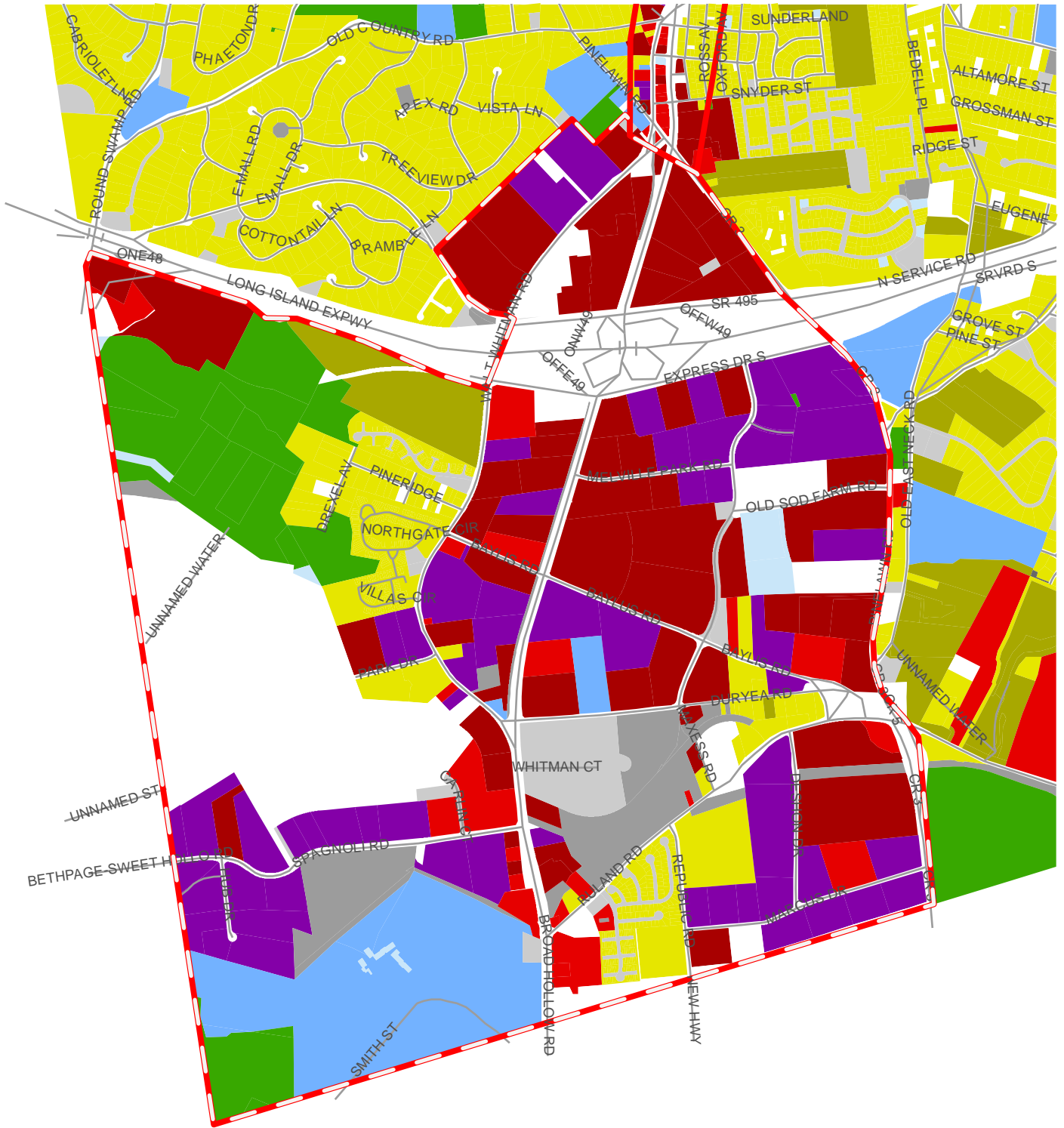


Existing Land Use

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Water | Office | Nodes and Corridors |
| Agriculture | Recreation & Open Space | Hamlet Centers |
| Residential | Institutional | |
| Vacant | Transportation | |
| Commercial | Utilities | |
| Industrial | Waste Handling & Management | |
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.9
Huntington Village
Geographic Focal Areas



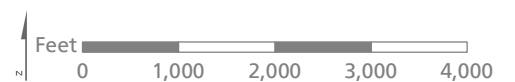


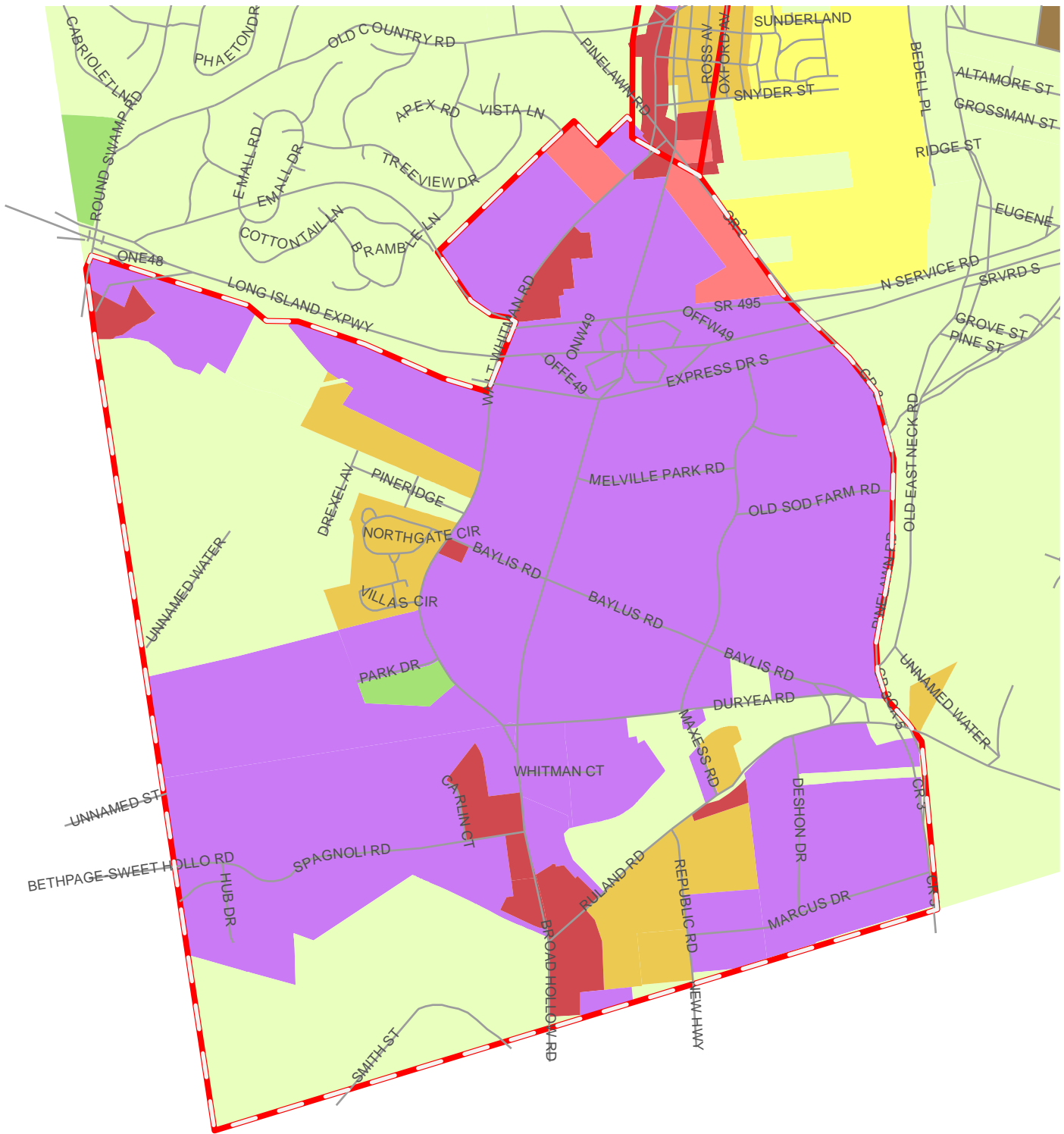
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.11
Melville Employment Center
Geographic Focal Areas



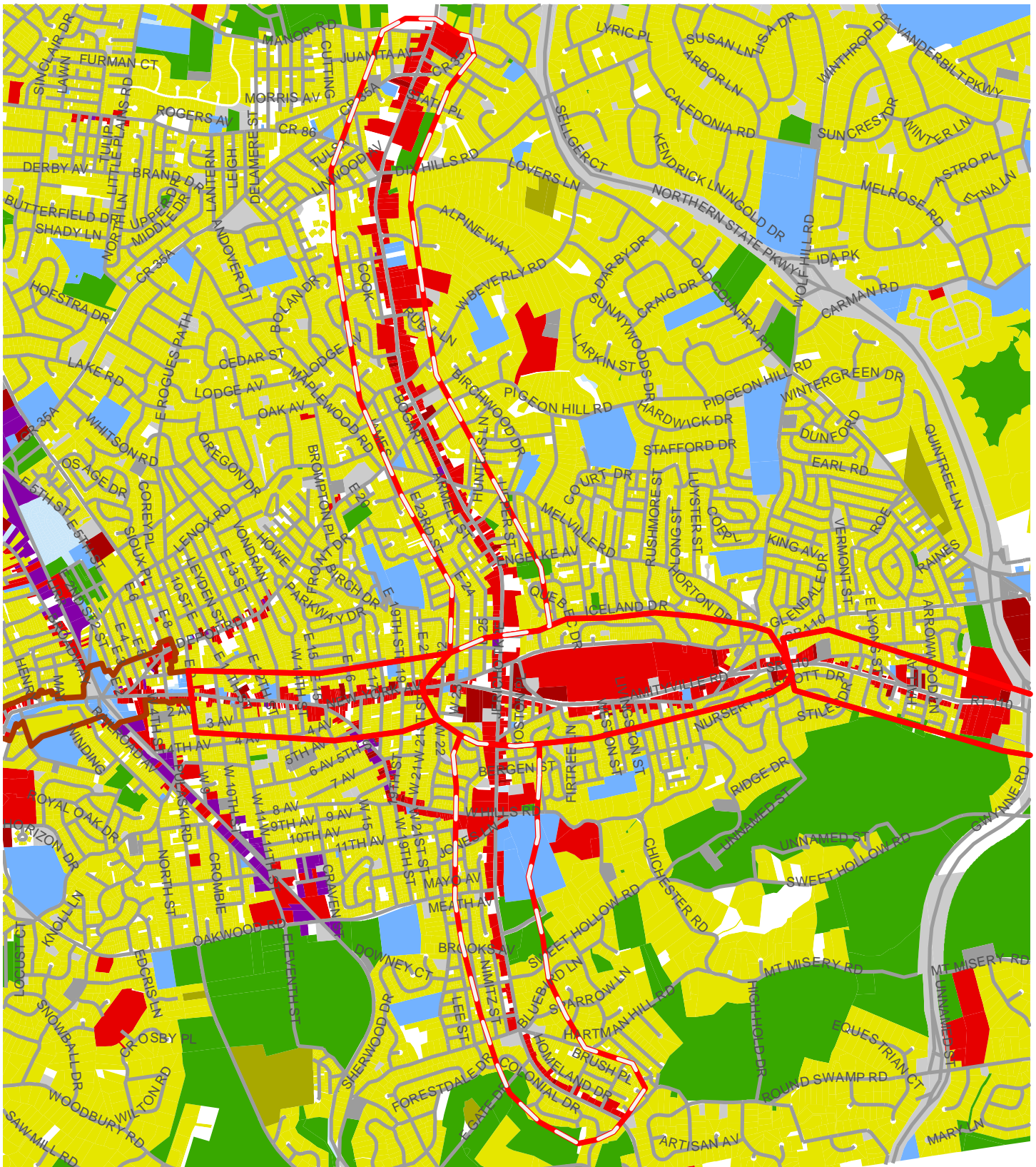


Generalized Existing Zoning

- Office
 - Commercial
 - C6 Overlay
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Planned Residential District
 - Residential Retirement Community
 - Residential Medical Services
 - Incorporated Villages
 - Nodes and Corridors
 - Hamlet Centers
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.12
Melville Employment Center
Geographic Focal Areas





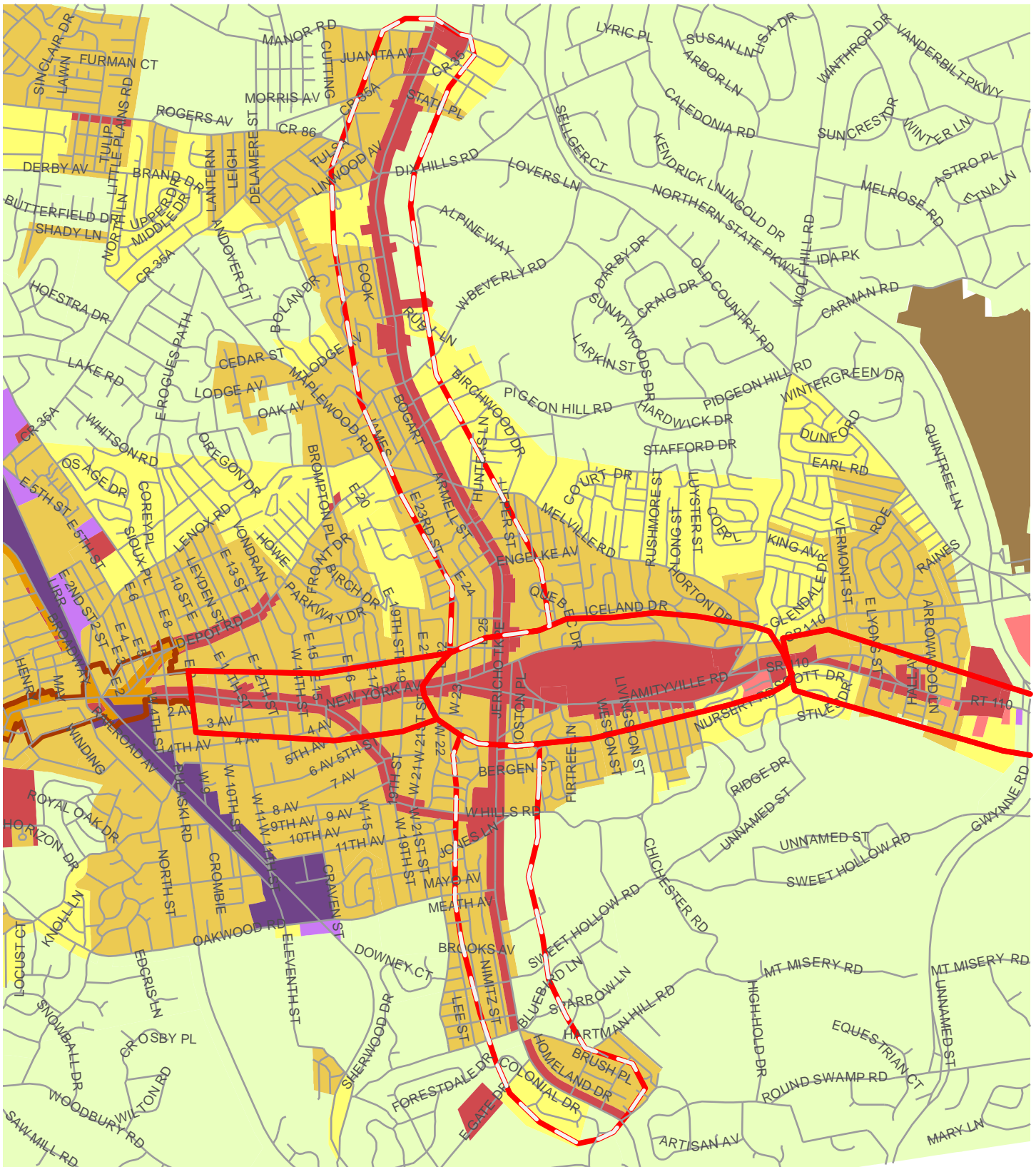
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.13
Jericho Turnpike West
Geographic Focal Areas



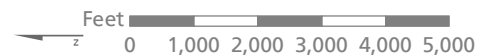


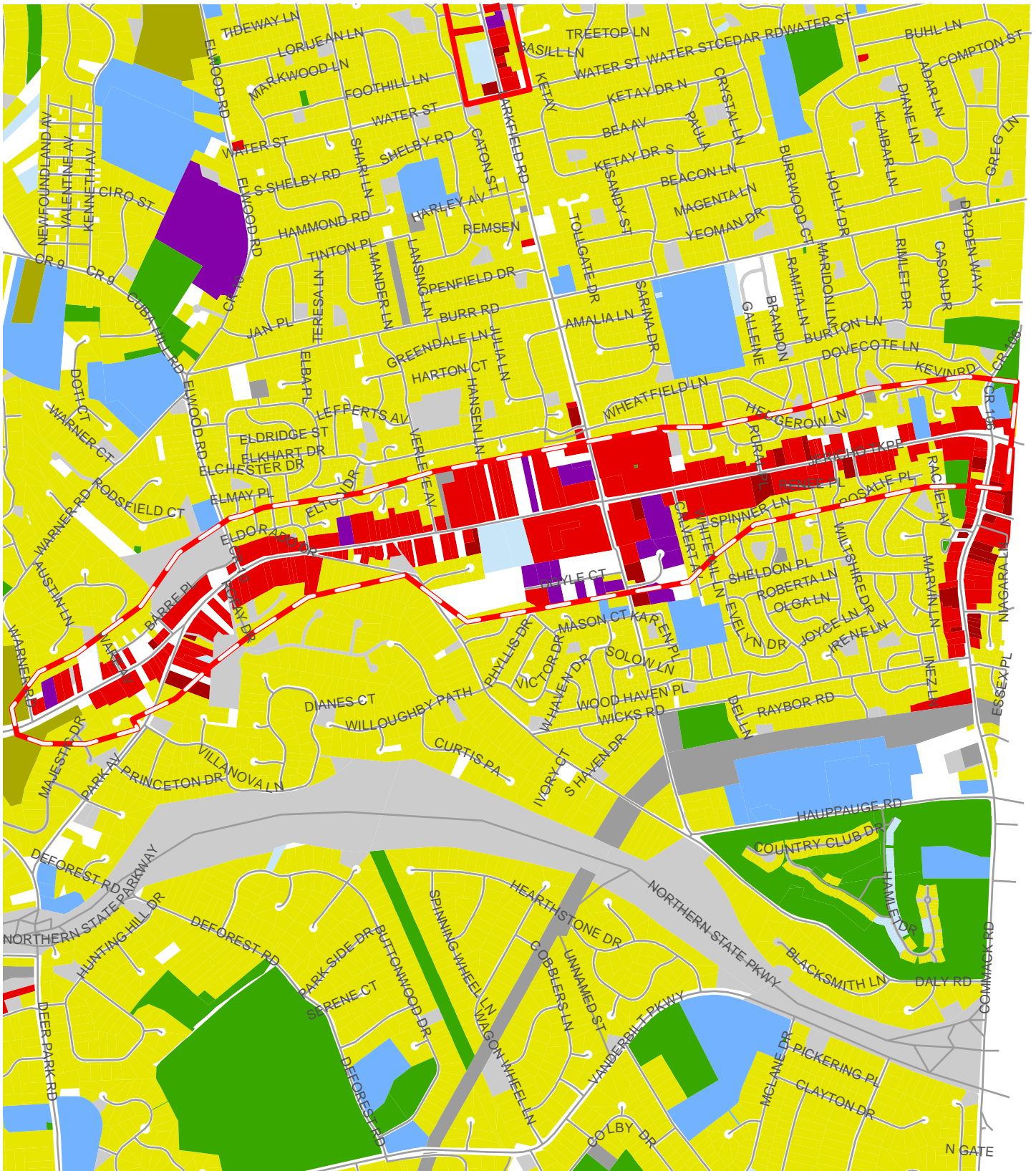
Existing Generalized Zoning

- Office
 - Commercial
 - C6 Overlay
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Planned Residential District
 - Residential Retirement Community
 - Residential Medical Services
 - Incorporated Villages
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.14
Jericho Turnpike West
Geographic Focal Areas

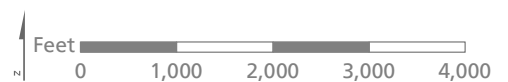


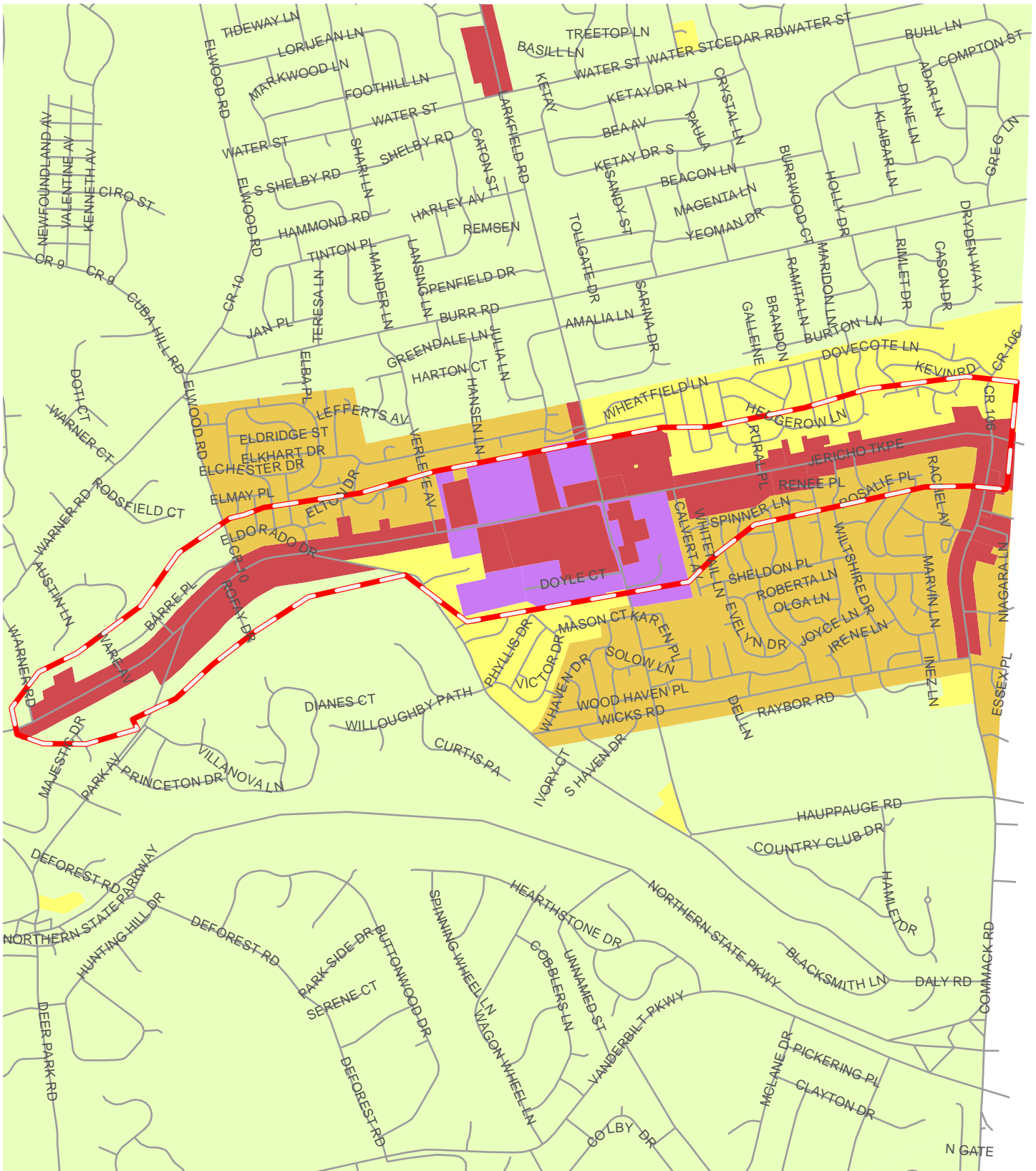


Existing Land Use

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Water | Office | Nodes and Corridors |
| Agriculture | Recreation & Open Space | Hamlet Centers |
| Residential | Institutional | |
| Vacant | Transportation | |
| Commercial | Utilities | |
| Industrial | Waste Handling & Management | |
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

Figure A.15
Jericho Turnpike East
Geographic Focal Areas



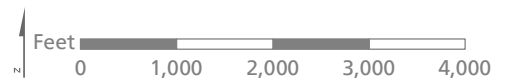


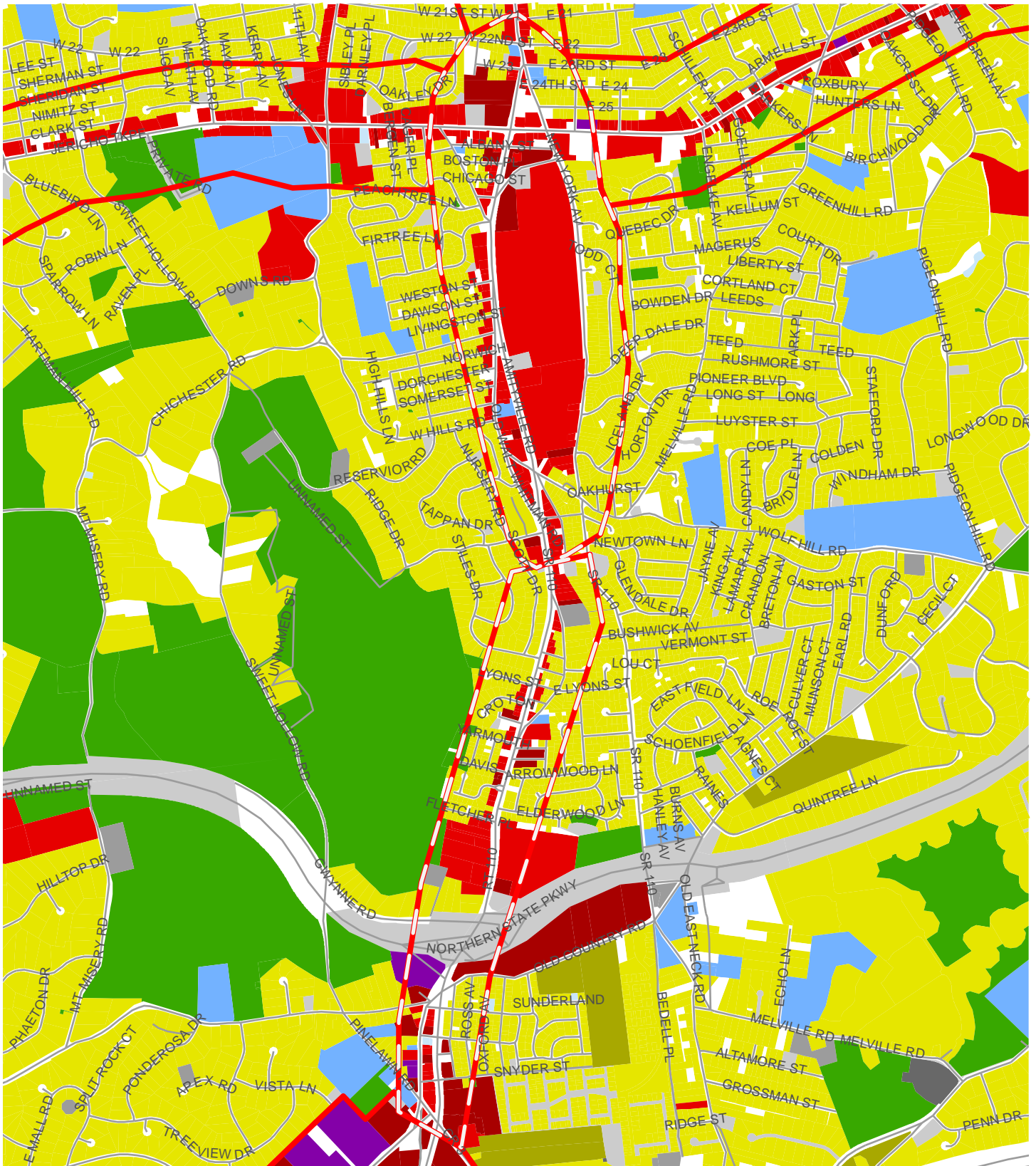
Generalized Existing Zoning

- Office
 - Commercial
 - C6 Overlay
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Planned Residential District
 - Residential Retirement Community
 - Residential Medical Services
 - Incorporated Villages
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.16
Jericho Turnpike East
Geographic Focal Areas





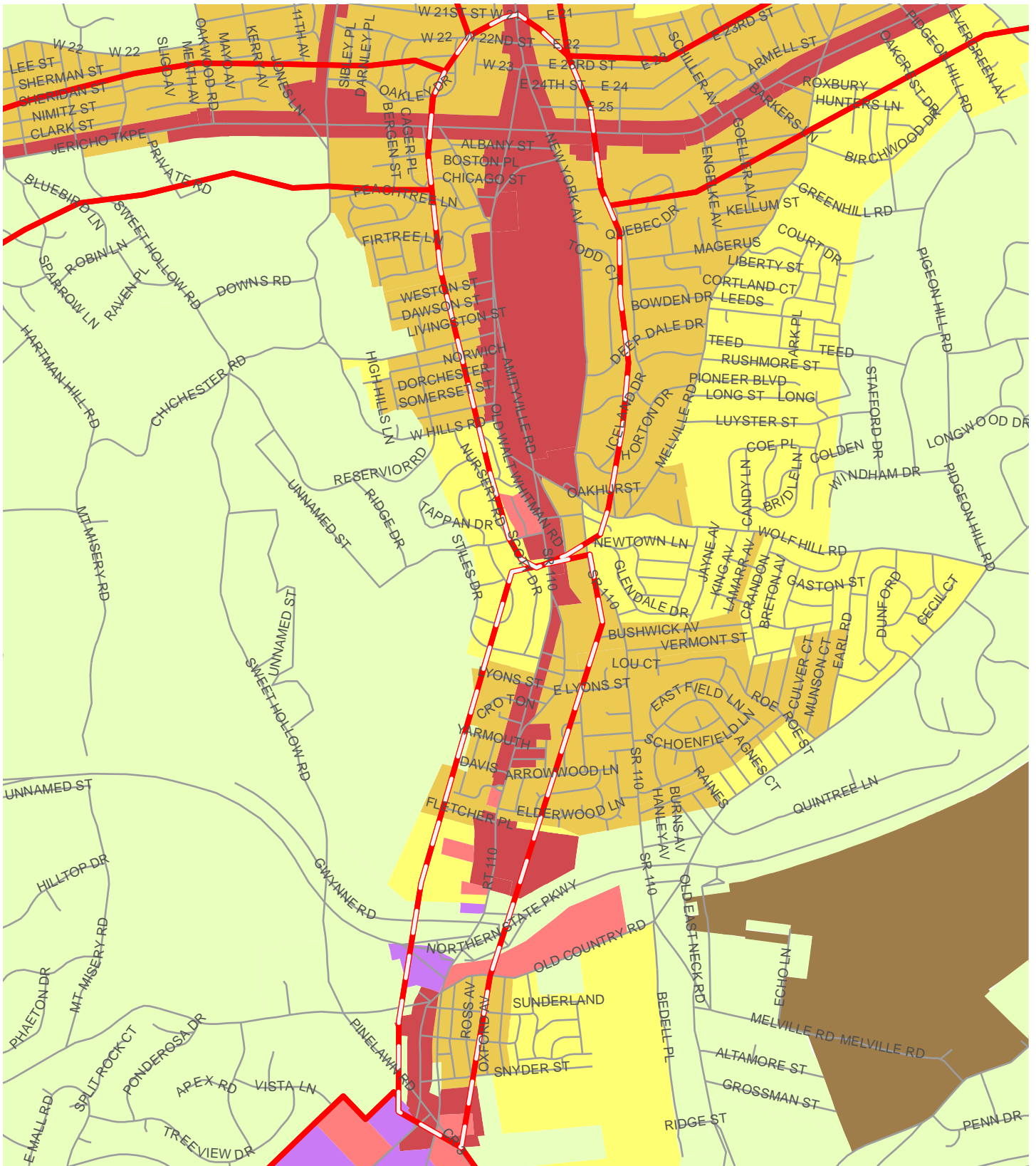
Existing Land Use

- Water
 - Agriculture
 - Residential
 - Vacant
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Recreation & Open Space
 - Institutional
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Waste Handling & Management
- Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.17
Route 110
Geographic Focal Areas





Existing Generalized Zoning

- Office
- Commercial
- C6 Overlay
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Planned Residential District
- Residential Retirement Community
- Residential Medical Services
- Incorporated Villages

Data Source: Town of Huntington, New York State

- Nodes and Corridors
- Hamlet Centers

Figure A.18
Route 110
Geographic Focal Areas



